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Challenging minds in the changing Times

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The challenge for Labour is, can Blair be more like Thatcher?

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In Russia you simply queue up and then get what you're given!

**William Rees-Mogg**

The psychological similarities of Cook and Clinton are striking

**An authoritative voice in defence of sanity, and spiked with wit****An astringent view from the Right; calculated to provoke**

Michael Gove

We need 12,000 more nurses, say hospitals

BY IAN MURRAY, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

THE NHS is short of between 12,000 and 13,000 nurses, according to the Royal College of Nursing.

The shortfall, based on vacancies reported by three-quarters of hospitals in England, Wales and Scotland last April, shows a steep rise from the 8,000 figure quoted up to now by the Department of Health. The RCN believes that the figure is even higher.

Recruitment remains extremely difficult but the Government faces having to find double the 15,000 staff it promised to hire during the next three years if it is to bring the NHS up to full nursing strength.

Nurses cost £7 billion out of

the £44 billion spent on the NHS, but the whole service is on the edge of crisis because there is a shortage of nurses on almost every ward in the land. The NHS has a complement of 295,000 nurses, but part-time working means that 370,000 are needed to do all the work.

Recruitment to nursing courses, however, is proving increasingly difficult with fewer young people apparently attracted by a career of high dedication and relatively low pay.

There is a high and growing drop-out rate from among those who are accepted. Last year 14 per cent of entries discontinued their course, 2 per cent more than in the previous

year. New admissions to the register have fallen by 26 per cent in the past seven years. The number of students in pre-registration nursing education has dropped from 53,500 to 45,500 in the past four years.

Recruits from overseas have become an essential part of staffing and one nurse in six joining the register has come from abroad. Many of the nurses come from developing countries which means that their skills are lost to a place that arguably needs them even more than Britain.

Even so the shortage in Britain is having serious consequences for the entire health service. A survey by the Royal

College of Nursing in early December — before the current crisis — found that 71 per cent of wards reported nursing vacancies, with one in ten wards at least four registered nurses short.

On average there were only three nurses available for the early day shifts on wards with 27 patients and usually a nurse has to look after ten beds. Nurses have had so many duties devolved to them because of the shortage of doctors that they are responsible for the sole care throughout the day of a quarter of all patients.

On the day of the survey one in ten posts was filled by an agency nurse. The RCN calculates that agency and overtime nursing costs the NHS £600 million a year. Agency nurses can earn up to 15 per cent more than inside the NHS and can choose the shifts they want to work. The RCN argues that if their pay claim for parity with teachers were met it would stop the haemorrhage of trained staff and boost recruitment to the necessary levels. The cost would be £1.2 billion — double the amount spent on agencies and overtime but would bring stability and confidence to the workforce.

After three years training a nurse can expect to earn no more than £28,855 — 17 per cent below the starting rate for a teacher.

If the nurse does stay with the job the highest pay for a post with trust-wide responsibility is £26,965. In September the Government announced a £1,000 a year bonus for extra responsibility, but this will be available only to 200 working in senior grades.

Leading article, page 21

Young volunteers to ease staffing crisis

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS of young millennium volunteers will help to ease the staffing shortages in hospitals and schools, as well as revitalising sink estates, under plans to be announced this week.

The £50 million scheme has run into a series of delays since featuring in Labour's election manifesto. Once billed as a civilian equivalent of national service, it was intended to cater for 100,000 volunteers by next year, but has been scaled down after disagreements over long-term funding and leadership of the programme.

Young people aged 16-25 will receive out-of-pocket expenses to work on a range of

community-based projects. Local authorities and voluntary bodies will be invited to bid for Government support in three stages, starting this spring. The scheme, mostly for unemployed young people, will be based on pilot projects from the Sainsbury store chain, in Cardiff, Sunderland and Southwark, South London. Volunteers have helped to raise reading standards in primary schools and assisted auxiliary staff in hospitals and retirement homes, as well as working on environmental projects.

David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, has waged a lengthy campaign in Whitehall to establish a large-scale volunteering initiative. Until last year's negotiations with the Treasury, only £15 million from the Windfall Tax on the former public utilities had been allocated to the scheme.

Long an advocate of volunteer work as a route into employment as well as a benefit to the community, Mr Blunkett has said the scheme will offer young people a sense of identity and the chance to feel welcomed rather than rejected. The first phase is likely to include some existing projects as well as the most innovative proposals that can be underway before the end of the year.

Tony Blair with Sir David Frost yesterday. The Prime Minister denied he was too far removed from the party's roots

Ministers unveil spending plans in 'relaunch week'

BY ROLAND WATSON
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

CABINET ministers will this week announce a series of policy initiatives as part of an attempt to shift the focus from personalisation and to issues.

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, will today announce that primary school pupils will have an hour-long mathematics lesson every day from September. A further £18 million will go towards extending the summer holiday "revision classes" in literacy and numeracy for low-priority pupils into the Easter break.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, will unveil £250 million for a strategy to combat burglary, covering more than two million residents in 500 high crime areas. The money will go towards security measures such as closed circuit television.

Alistair Darling, the Social Security Secretary, will announce £80 million for pilot projects to help create a "single gateway" for all claimants entering the benefit system. It is the latest step in requiring all

claimants to turn up for job interviews before being awarded benefits.

The initiatives follow the Prime Minister's assertion during his speech last week in Cape Town last week that he is prepared to inject an authoritarian streak into his government to achieve necessary reforms.

With MPs returning to Westminster to mark the first time since the resignations of Peter Mandelson and Geoffrey Robinson, Tony Blair used an interview with Sir David Frost on BBC1 yesterday to try to allay the fears of some Labour MPs that he was becoming too remote from his concerns.

The Prime Minister made clear that he had been kept up to date with the troubles facing the National Health Service while he was on holiday in the Seychelles and during official government visit to South Africa. "I'm not going to tolerate a health service where people are lying on trolleys waiting for treatment," he said.

He also indicated that he had digested the concerns raised by some senior ministers about his links with the Liberal Democ-

rats. Although he maintained it was "seriously" to explore common ground between the two parties, Mr Blair dismissed the idea of Paddy Ashdown joining the Cabinet. He appeared to dash Liberal Democrat hopes of a referendum on proportional representation before the next election.

Mr Blair said he was "fed up" with facing questions about his relationship with Gordon Brown, insisting it was "as strong as any relationship between any Prime Minister and Chancellor" there's every reason to believe". He conceded that the gossip about personalities in the Government was fuelled from the inside, but he gave it no currency. "Some of the lower-downs twit about a bit," he said.

He insisted that it was the "big-picture questions" like health, education and crime that mattered to voters. He said: "I don't say everything in the garden is roses. There are a lot of problems we've got to sort out. But we are sorting them out." He said that because the Conservatives had not developed criticism on policy issues, the focus was diverted to personalities.

Shakespeare theatre site identified

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British hostage reported 'alive and well'

TENSE negotiations continued last night for the release of John Brooke, the kidnapped oil worker, after Yemeni ministers promised Britain he will not use force to resolve the abduction.

Armed tribesmen who fought their way inside a guarded compound to seize Mr Brooke are demanding the release of a comrade accused of murder and sabotage in exchange for Mr Brooke's freedom.

Mohammed Hussein Arab, Yemen's Interior Minister, insisted last night that Mr Brooke was "alive and well". Tribal leaders also assured negotiations sent by the Yemeni government he was being well treated, but warned he would be killed if troops surrounding

Yemeni tribesmen demand release of comrade for abducted oilman, writes Daniel McGrory in Aden

their hideout, north of the oil-rich Marib region, attempt a rescue.

While it was feared this latest hostage crisis could drag on for weeks, security chiefs were investigating alleged links between a London mosque and the plot to blow up British targets in Aden on Christmas Day.

In a new development one of the five Britons arrested as part of that plot has allegedly confessed he was paid \$2,000 (£1,600) to bomb the British Consulate, the Anglican

Church and Aden's biggest hotel in simultaneous attacks.

Monson Ghani, from London, is also said to have admitted meeting Abu Hassan, the leader of the kidnap gang that abducted 16 western tourists. They are alleged to have had two meetings just hours before secret police rounded up the Britons.

He is also said to have described himself as a mercenary, as he told police he was an atheist who came to Yemen for money. Questioned in Aden's central security head-



Brooke kidnapped by armed tribesmen

quarters at the weekend the man apparently disclosed links to a London group known as "Ansar Sharif", the Followers of Islamic Law.

group is headed by Hamza Al Masri, also known as Abu Hamza, a prominent Moslem cleric who preaches at the Finsbury Park mosque, north London, and who is known for his extremist views.

Last night in Aden security chiefs were intensifying their search for a 17-year-old Briton, Mohammed Kamel Mustapha, who they wish to speak with in connection with the Christmas Day plot. The teenager, whose passport was allegedly found in a terrorist hideout, is believed to be Al Masri's son. Scotland Yard sources confirmed that the alleged links were under investigation.

If proved, it will seriously embarrass British authorities that such an Islamic terrorist

plot is connected with a London mosque and is using young British followers. The cleric under investigation is known to have raised thousands of pounds over recent years in Britain for extreme Islamic causes abroad and lost both arms in a bombing inci-

dent in the Afghan war. When three of the Britons were arrested, Yemeni officials allegedly found video cassettes in their hotel room which came from a London-based Islamic fundamentalist group which shows Islamic terrorists in training camps.

Yemeni authorities are believed to be examining whether any of the five suspects had visited the terrorist camp of Abu Hassan, who days later seized 16 hostages to avenge the foiled Christmas Day plot.

Security sources say the bombers drove away from Hassan's camp with a boot full of explosives and weapons, including rocket propelled grenades. The British man who allegedly confessed his part in the plot is said to

have admitted handling TNT explosives. Yemeni authorities say there was "a substantial amount of explosive which would cause a massive loss of life".

The group is said to have picked Aden because of its British colonial past and as it was seen as an easy target. The already strained relations between Whitehall and Sana'a over the handling of the kidnapping in which three Britons and an Australian died were not helped by complaints from some of the Britons held in an Aden detention centre that they have been tortured.

MPs should learn more today about the British links to the recent terrorist outrages in Yemen when Robin Cook makes a full statement.

Computer virus has date with destiny

By NICK NUTTALL

A COMPUTER virus that "kills" a machine's start-up system is spreading, experts said yesterday.

The rogue electronic code, designed to trigger on April 26 and known as *Varian CIH*, is spread by people downloading games or buying infected CDs.

The computer's drives appear to hum into life. But the screen is blank and the machine fails to operate. The computer is effectively dead.

Chris Hilder, a network and security consultant at the National Computing Centre in Manchester, pointed to the emergence of several recent computer viruses that push electronic warfare into new realms. Experts fear that these may be test-runs for even more destructive rogue codes. Back Orifice — a pun on Microsoft's Back Office products — and Net Bus allow a user thousands of miles away to take over someone else's PC keyboard, mouse and other functions.

The viruses also allow someone to hijack the computer's speakers and microphones, allowing them to listen in on private conversations.



Winter wonderland: hikers enjoying the snow on the moors yesterday near Pickering in North Yorkshire. More is expected to fall over parts of eastern England today

Shakespeare theatre site identified

BY NORMAN HAMMOND, ARCHAEOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

THE site of Shakespeare's first theatre may have been pinpointed, not far from London's Liverpool Street Station.

The playhouse, known as the Theatre, was known to be in the Shoreditch area, but Simon Blatherwick has now documented an exact site as part of an English Heritage survey of probably surviving remains of Shakespearean playhouses. He believes that substantial archaeological remains of the Theatre may survive.

"This is a hugely important site," he said. Mr Blatherwick previously co-directed excavation of the Rose, the first such playhouse to be discovered, in Southwark. Before it had been generally assumed that no remains of Elizabethan playhouses survived.

The Theatre was built in 1576, and several of Shakespeare's plays, including *Richard III* and *Romeo and Juliet*, were first staged there, as well as works by others. Its significance is the greater because in December 1596 the players who owned the building began to take it down. The timbers were shipped over the Thames.

In Southwark they were used to build the Globe, the theatre most associated with Shakespeare's plays — which has been reconstructed under the late Sam Wanamaker's direc-

Irish told to get their eyes smiling again

BY AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE Irish will be taught to be friendlier in a £250,000 government campaign intended to improve the country's reputation for hospitality.

Concern has been mounting that the smiling welcome that was once Ireland's trademark has fallen by the wayside as the tourist industry focuses on making as much money as possible from the millions who visit Ireland each year.

A wealth of documents exist, mainly from lawsuits between the actors' company and the landlord of the Theatre's site, and also from the construction of the Globe.

Several other playhouses sites of the Shakespearean age also have high archaeological potential, the survey suggests.

Among them is that of the Hope, which was built in 1613 near the Rose as a theatre and bear-baiting arena, and where Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* was first performed.

Nearly two dozen theatre sites have been located, including one near St Paul's Cathedral, where the offices of *The Times* stood for 200 years.

The probable archaeological survival of so many Elizabethan and Jacobean playhouses means we could be on the brink of a revolution in theatre studies," said Dr Jean Wilson. "We may learn the exact plan of Shakespeare's Wooden O."

"People come to Ireland be-

cause it is friendly and there is a feeling abroad that we need to remind people in the tourism industry of that," said John Brown, of Bord Fáilte, the Irish tourism board.

The number of tourists visiting Ireland doubled to 5 million between 1988 and 1997. The industry predicts that 6 million will arrive this year and 7 million in 2002. Over the next four months workers in the industry will be sent guidance outlining the way in which they should welcome them and deal with their complaints.

Surveys of the visitors have repeatedly shown that they are attracted by the famed warmth and spontaneity of the Irish people. Most say that they enjoyed their holidays, but the Irish Tourist Industry Confederation gave warning this week that the tourism boom risked "prompting an impersonal reaction from the population".

One owner of a B&B in Galway, who declined to be named, said that she doubted the campaign would make much difference: "People want to sit and chat for ages. They are in holiday mode, but we have beds to make children to attend to and we really don't have time. It's a pity, but it's the way it is."

Salvatore Ferragamo

SALE NOW ON

Cartoon capers force Disney recall

FROM GILES WHITSELL
IN LOS ANGELES

THE Walt Disney Company has recalled 3.4 million copies of a cartoon video because two of its 110,000 frames contain unspecified "objectionable" images.

The offending frames in *The Rescuers*, a story about two mice saving a young girl on a riverboat, are visible only to very careful viewers. Each doctored image flashed by in a thimble of a second, a spokeswoman said, adding that the recall is necessary for the company "to keep its promise to families that they can trust and rely on the Disney brand".

Rumours of sabotage in the studio's

giant animation division have surfaced before, but never been proved. They include some of the more imaginative plot twists in cartoon mythology, including a glimpse of a priest with an erect penis in *The Little Mermaid*, the appearance of the word "sex" in a cloud of dust in *The Lion King*, and an exhortation from Aladdin for "good teenagers" to "take off your clothes".

The claims were first circulated by the American Life League, a fundamentalist Christian group opposed to abortion and to what it saw as Disney's betrayal of its pro-family stance with such policies as health benefits for the partners of gay employees. Sensing the presence of inter-

day Luddites in the bowels of a corporate giant, *The Washington Post*, among other newspapers, brought the claims to national attention.

Aladdin's apparent naughtiness was traced by *The Wall Street Journal* to two young men, one in Colorado and one in Iowa, claiming to have heard the order to undress. Instead of "Good teenagers, take off your clothes," however, most listeners heard, "Scat good tiger. Take off and go." The supposedly erect member in *The Little Mermaid* is in fact a knobby knee emerging briefly from under a cast-off Disney and its defenders insist.

The presence of the word "sex" anywhere in *The Lion King* remains moot.

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THE TIMES MONDAY JANUARY 11 1999

HOME NEWS 7

Mother's brave stand against IRA killers

Republican whose son was shot condemns 'mere thugs'

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

MAUREEN KEARNEY, a 65-year-old grandmother, was in a West Belfast shopping centre last week when she spotted the man she blames for the IRA's killing of her son Andrew last July. The man was looking "happy as Larry with a trolley laden full of goods".

Mrs Kearney strode up to him and thrust a photograph of Andrew in his face. He laughed and "something just snapped", she said. She began shouting and accusing the man of murder before a large crowd of astonished onlookers. By the time she was finally led away, shaking and crying, everyone was rooting for her.

Mrs Kearney is a strong, brave woman. Though she is a staunch republican and lives in the heart of the republican Twink Brook estate, with its IRA murals and graffiti, she refuses meekly to accept the IRA's brutal brand of summary justice. At great personal risk she is waging a high-profile campaign to embarrass the IRA and bring her 33-year-old son's killers to trial.

Journalists and television crews from around the world now descend on the tiny living room that she has turned into a virtual shrine. There she explains how the IRA used to be full of idealists fighting to protect the nationalist community and win Irish unity. Now they are mostly locked up, she says, and the new breed are " mere thugs who terrorise their own community in pursuit of money and power".

Those are tough words from a woman whose father fought for the original IRA, whose

brother was one of the first IRA suspects interned in 1971, and who was a cousin of the hunger striker Bobby Sands, but the facts simply support her.

In the first week of this year alone five men were shot by republicans or loyalist paramilitaries, ten beaten and at least 14 exiled, according to figures released by the Belfast group Families Against Intimidation and Terror.

Last year there were 237 paramilitary beatings or shootings and 149 families or individuals exiled. The ceasefires and the Good Friday accord may have stopped the bombs in London, but on Northern Ireland's grim estates the violence continues.

Mrs Kearney's son was one of 55 people killed by terrorists last year — the worst total since 1994. A fearless, outspoken man who lived for football; his "crime" was to pick fights in pubs first with the man accused by his mother and later with the commander of the IRA's North Belfast brigade, who had beaten up a

woman. He knew that he was in trouble. He had received threats. Mrs Kearney contacted a senior IRA man to plead for her son, but was told: "I'm sorry, it's out of my hands." Mr Kearney briefly fled to London, but returned because he had three children living in Belfast.

The IRA came just after midnight on Sunday, July 19. Eight men burst into his eighth-floor flat in North Belfast's New Lodge area as he was cradling his two-week-old daughter.

One man held his girlfriend, Lisa. The rest dragged him into the stairwell and shot him through both knees with a .45 revolver, severing an artery. Before leaving, the gang cut the telephone wire and jammed the lift doors. Other IRA men were guarding the floors below, and three girls were on hand to take away the weapons. By the time that Lisa could summon help, her partner had bled to death.

The following month Mrs Kearney used her contacts to obtain a meeting with the IRA command staff and demand an explanation. Seven weeks later she received some answers.

"They were very respectful and shamed-faced," she said. They apologised for the murder. They said the attack was sanctioned by the commanding officer of the Belfast brigade at the request of the North Belfast commander, but was never meant to end in her son's death. They denied that the lift was jammed, said the telephone was cut simply



Maureen Kearney beside the grave of her son Andrew, who bled to death after being shot by the IRA for picking fights with the wrong men

to ensure the attackers escaped, and claimed that the man who was supposed to call an ambulance forgot. Mrs Kearney accepts none of that.

She is still heartbroken. She removes all the clocks in her house each Saturday so she

does not relive the events of that July night. Knowing her son was killed by her "own people", and merely for revenge, makes it particularly hard to bear, she said.

But she is determined to continue her campaign, despite

the real danger that the IRA will silence her. "They think they are getting away with it, but not as long as I'm alive," she said. Publicly denouncing the IRA was hard — "it's like condemning my own family" — but "I'll carry on to my last

breath, be that by natural or other means". She has five other children and 17 grandchildren, so "there's plenty of us to keep it going".

Few in Mrs Kearney's terrorised community dare to back her publicly, but she says she

is receiving "marvellous support" through letters, telephone calls and people approaching her in the streets. "Most people say, 'Keep on going. I've not had one person who disagrees with what I've done.'"

Terror calendar keeps a date with gunmen

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE IRA has published a calendar showing photographs of terrorists wielding weapons on every page. A Unionist leader said that it sent a chilling new year message to the people of Northern Ireland.

Jeffrey Donaldson, the Ulster Unionist Party MP for Lagan Valley, said that the Republican Resistance Calendar for 1999 was "a sickening reminder of the potential for terror which still exists within the republican movement", despite the Good Friday accord. Ian Paisley Jnr, the Democratic Unionist Party's justice spokesman, said that the IRA calendar showed that the IRA was still an organisation of

killers with no thought of peace.

The cover shows a hooded terrorist aiming a gun at the camera. Pictures for other months show terrorists brandishing AK-47 assault rifles and launching rocket launchers and adopting a variety of other menacing poses.

A senior republican in West Belfast, who sent copies to friends in Boston, New York and Sydney, said yesterday: "It's a reminder to all nationalists, particularly the younger elements, of what we had to live through before the first IRA ceasefire [August 1994].

"It might upset some Unionists, but they certainly don't

cause offence to the people in the areas where I live and frequent. The sales have been amazing, and this sort of publicity is bound to heighten the interest. We've probably got a bestseller on our hands."

Mr Donaldson, who had a relative murdered by the IRA, said: "I suggest that the Secretary of State [Mo Mowlam] should put a copy of this calendar on her wall as a reminder of the need for decommissioning."

"I think the calendar, along with the thinly veiled threats recently issued through *Republican News*, demonstrates that the IRA is still wedded to violence." The IRA said in its

newspaper *Ai Phoblacht* on January 7 that there was "growing frustration" within the republican movement. It accused Unionist leaders of resurrecting preconditions that caused the collapse of its last ceasefire in 1994.

Unionists said that the IRA was threatening a return to violence unless they dropped their demand that republicans begin disarming before Sinn Fein joins Northern Ireland's Assembly.

KIM BEAZLEY, Australia's Labor Opposition leader, is willing to meet Gerry Adams next month.

The Sinn Fein president, who was once banned from the country because of the IRA's violence, has been granted a visa to begin an eight-day tour in Sydney on February 15.

He will also visit Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne and Perth. Mr Beazley said he would meet Mr Adams if invited to do so.

A spokesman for John Howard, the Prime Minister, said it was uncertain whether he would agree to talks because of Mr Adams's failure directly to condemn IRA violence. *The Sunday Age* reported.

With David Trimble, the Northern Ireland First Minis-

ter, resisting pressure to set up an executive at Stormont because of the IRA's refusal to begin decommissioning its weapons.

The Sinn Fein president, who was once banned from the country because of the IRA's violence, has been granted a visa to begin an eight-day tour in Sydney on February 15.

The IRA has insisted that there will be no disarmament, but British and Irish government demands on the republican leadership to make some sort of move are likely to intensify as Mr Adams prepares to travel to Sydney.

He said: "Like other conflict resolution processes, the international community has played a significant role in consolidating and building on the efforts that are being made to achieve a democratic peace settlement."



Sales of the calendar suggest it will be a bestseller, says a senior republican in Belfast

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Delhi vows to curb attacks on Christians

THE Indian Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, visited western India yesterday in an attempt to curb a wave of atrocities against Christians.

Repeated attacks on Christians in Gujarat, the supposedly tectonic home state of Mahatma Gandhi, appear to have been given unofficial patronage by the state government, which is run by the hardline Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The organisation, whose supporters include extreme Hindu nationalists, also heads the coalition federal Government.

In a rare move, President Narayanan, who is an "untouchable", urged Mr Vajpayee in two letters to intervene. Extremist organisations in Gujarat are particularly targeting former Hindus who converted to Christianity. "Untouchables" and low castes sometimes convert to other religions in what is invariably a futile attempt to raise their social status.

Opposition politicians in Delhi have urged President Narayanan to press for the dismissal of the Gujarat state government for failing to protect Christians. H.D. Deve Gowda, a former prime minister, called the atrocities a national shame. "It is not law and order problem. This is an attack on a religion in an organised way."

Christian tribal members in Gujarat have been the main target, and Mr Vajpayee visited several tribal groups yesterday to try to reassure them that they would be protected. He said that anybody attacking churches would face stern punishment, as would anybody who at-

Local officials said to protect fanatics,
Christopher

Thomas writes

tacked Hindu temples in reprisal. Exemplary punishment should be awarded to perpetrators of such crimes, he said in the village of Ahwa, where a Hindu group attacked a church last month.

Law and order issues are the responsibility of state governments, unless events move sufficiently out of control to mobilise the army or paramilitary forces. Social workers urged Mr Vajpayee to introduce a ban on all religious conversions.

India's Constitution enshrines

secularism, but the BJP and its more extremist sister parties have increasingly challenged the tradition of religious tolerance. Muslims make up 12 per cent of the population, and Christians and Sikhs are about 2 per cent.

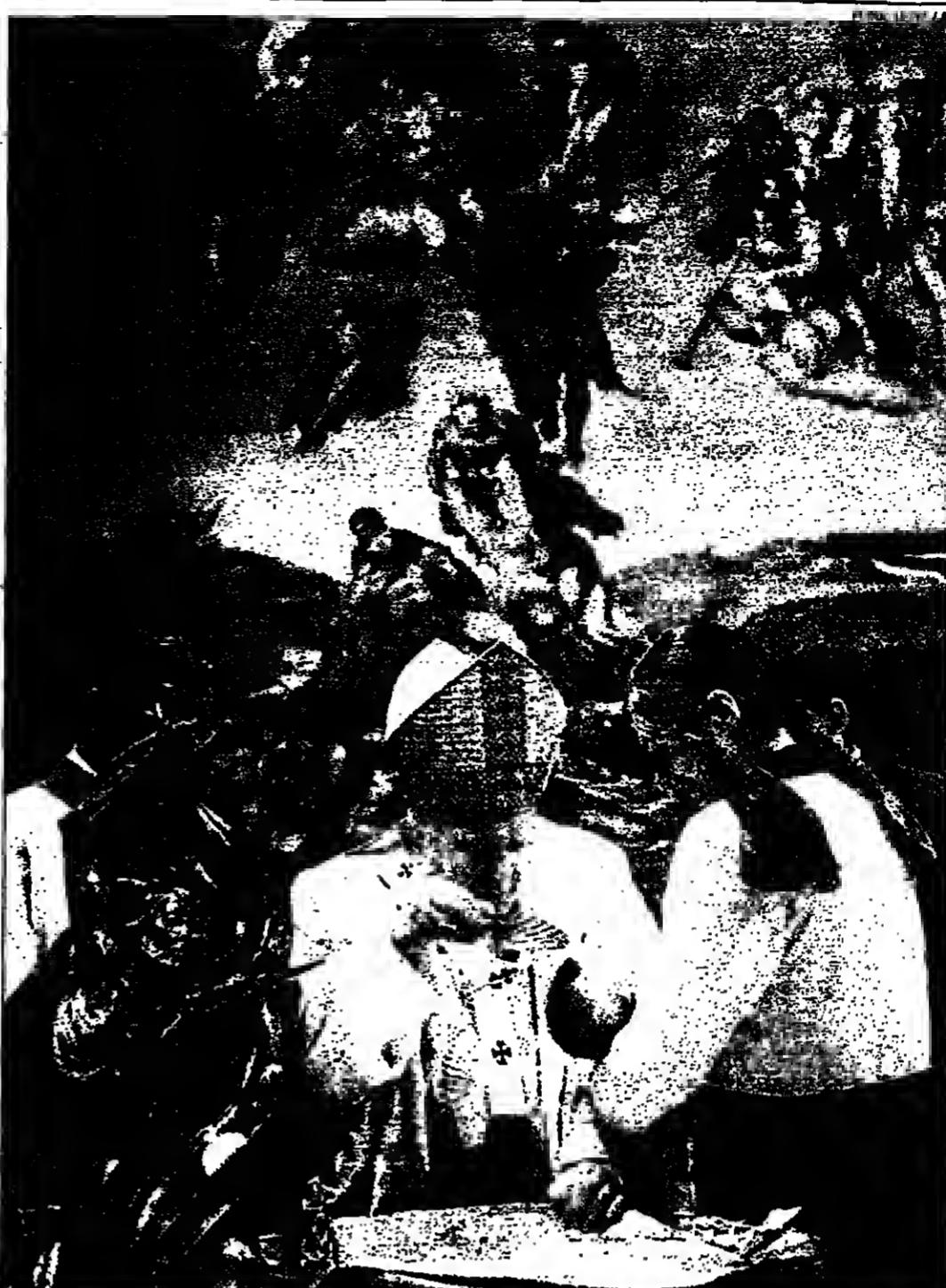
Groups allied with the BJP have attacked churches and Christian schools in Gujarat amid allegations that Christian missionaries persuade poor, illiterate Hindus to convert in return for money or other inducements. The missionaries admit to proselytising tribal Indians, but deny offering money.

Christian missionaries generally operate in the remotest and poorest regions of India, where they carry out social work and help to improve local infrastructure. This often leads to conversions from Hinduism and, occasionally, Islam.

The Prime Minister's visit to Gujarat will be seen as an attempt by the BJP to tame its more extremist wings. The party came to prominence on a platform of religious extremism, but popular disgust with some of its tactics have led to a decline in support. It suffered humiliating defeats in state elections in November and is seeking to moderate its Hindu nationalist image.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council) is believed to be behind attacks on Christian targets since Christmas in Gujarat. The group is allied to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, an extremist organisation that played a pivotal role in the 1992 destruction of the Babri Mosque in the holy city of Ayodhya, arguing that it occupied the site of a destroyed temple.

Vajpayee told tribal groups they would be protected



The Pope baptises Wiktorja Wnorowsky in front of Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican yesterday. The baby was one of 19 to be christened by the pontiff

Biko policeman faces murder charge after amnesty refused

FROM SAM KILEY
IN JOHANNESBURG

ONE of the alleged killers of Steve Biko, the Black Consciousness leader, has been denied amnesty by South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and faces a murder charge.

Gideon Nieuwoudt, then a police sergeant, was denied amnesty because applicants are required to make a

full confession and prove political motivation. He did not admit any crime. George Bizos, the Biko family lawyer, said, which disqualified him from amnesty.

During the commission hearings into the death in detention 22 years ago of Biko, which sparked international outrage and inspired Lord Attenborough's film *Cry Freedom*, five policemen who applied for amnesty, in-

cluding Nieuwoudt, failed to admit killing the activist. Some acknowledged that he had been chained to a metal grill, one confessed that his head had been "rammed against a wall" but all insisted that he had injured himself in a struggle with them.

Biko died after losing consciousness and being driven more than 750 miles from Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape to Pretoria as a re-

sult of the beatings handed out by Nieuwoudt and the others. He was denied medical attention throughout.

The officers say they tackled the 30-year-old Biko and accidentally slammed his head against a wall. He was then taken in a police car, naked and bleeding, and on the marathon drive lay on a blanket in the back of a Land Rover. He died on September 12, 1977, becoming

one of apartheid's most famed martyrs.

Mdu Lembode, a commission spokesman, confirmed that Nieuwoudt had been denied amnesty. No ruling has been made on the amnesty applications by the four other policemen.

Right-wing whites have accused the commission of conducting a witch-hunt against members of the National Party and the security services.

Nieuwoudt, who retired as a police colonel with a handsome severance package, is currently serving several life sentences for other murders.



Nieuwoudt denied any guilt

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Nigeria steps up war on Freetown rebels

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

AS FIGHTING in Sierra Leone intensified at the weekend, Nigeria sent in fresh troops to help the beleaguered intervention force, but rebels ignored African calls for a ceasefire.

Hundreds of soldiers from Nigeria and other West African countries flew to reinforce the Nigerian-led Econow force, which was struggling to stem the rebel advance into the centre of the capital, Freetown. Dozens of wounded troops were evacuated to the airport outside the city, where President Kabba has sought sanctuary.

Two journalists from the Associated Press news organisation were shot and wounded in Freetown yesterday, colleagues in the city said.

Nigerian fighter jets fired rockets into the rebel-held areas on Saturday. But yesterday, despite sporadic shellfire, fighting had died down as the rebels consolidated their hold on the eastern part of Freetown and government forces prepared a counter-attack. The centre was deserted as residents kept indoors, deprived of electricity and water, and faced with dwindling food stocks. State radio urged civilians not to go outside. Smoke rose from burning buildings.

African and international attempts to stop the fighting intensified at the weekend, but Sam Bockarie, the leader of the rebel Revolutionary United Front fighting alongside the ousted junta, rejected President Kabba's call for a ceasefire. He demanded a meeting on neutral territory with Foday Sankoh, the captured rebel leader, who is awaiting execution. Dozens of other rebels and former junta supporters have already been freed after rebel forces overran the central prison.

The Togolese and Ivory Coast foreign ministers set out for Freetown yesterday, hoping to negotiate with the President and Mr Sankoh, who is being held in a secret location.

Britain has sent the frigate HMS Norfolk to monitor the fighting. She is unlikely to intervene. "It's a straightforward precautionary measure to give us a ship available in that part of the world," a Defence Ministry spokesman said. "No decision has been taken yet on what, if anything, to use the Norfolk for."

About 50 Britons are still thought to be in the country, despite Foreign Office advice to leave.

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THE TIMES

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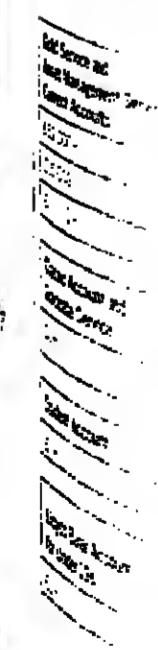
CHANGING TIMES

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17

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17

Schröder under pressure to speed up circulation of the euro

INSIDE GERMANY



BY ROGER BOYES

The euro could be in circulation as early as next year if some German politicians get their way. The successful launch of the currency has encouraged federalist Europeans across the party spectrum to call for an acceleration of the schedule for the introduction of euro cash.

The overall effect of such a move will be to leave Britain stranded since all the delicate calculations about how, when and if the Government is to recommend entry to European economic and monetary union (EMU) centre on 2002, when euros are supposed to become the coinage of the new boundaries that cut

core Europe — and who continues to shape the European strategy of the Opposition. "People have noticed the magnificent start of the euro," he says. "Now they should have the money in their pockets. The year 2000 would be a symbolic date for starting to use euro notes."

The European Parliament deputy, Elmar Brok, agrees.

"The sense of community would be boosted if one could immediately buy a gin and tonic with euros in Majorca."

Werner Hoyer, a former European minister in the Government of Helmut Kohl, wants Gerhard Schröder to urge his euroland counterparts to change the European

treaties and permit the use of euros as a daily transaction currency by the year 2001.

The Schröder Government is listening carefully to these voices. The currency sub-committee of the European Parliament will rule in the autumn whether production capacity and logistics make realistic an early introduction of the euro. The Finance Ministry thinks the three-year transition period is necessary.

Some politicians, such as the shrewd European thinker of the Social Democrats, Norbert Wiegert, understand that early use of euro coins would close some doors for Britain and

Greece. The Schröder team likes the idea of accelerating in at least one European direction, if only to deflect from its almost certain failure to reform the system of European financing or the common agricultural policy during its six-month presidency of the EU.

The motives of the German euro accelerators are clear enough. I do not think there is a devilish German plot to put Britain into dry dock. Herr Lamers knows how slowly political integration will come about, how little can be achieved in this six-month presidency period, and how ordinary Germans will despair of the endless, de-

tailed juggling needed to scratch back even a fraction of Germany's swollen budget contribution. If the euro is suddenly becoming popular, then the Government should fly with it, let it keep interest high, make it the driving force of integration.

But the real motivational element is that the Christian Democratic Opposition, nudged by the Bavarian Christian Social Union, could very easily adopt eurosceptical postures. The euro is doomed to disappoint. Unemployment in Germany has just edged back over the four million mark. One dismal forecast predicts that the German economy will grow by

only 1.4 per cent next year. The euro is not likely to create a jobs miracle and the mood could well turn sour.

Edmund Stoiber, the Bavarian Prime Minister, is propelling the Opposition towards the Right. He has just played his first card: an attempt to steer the conservative parties into an anti-immigration posture. A nationwide petition is to be drawn up by the opposition parties and will seek support for a move against the government initiative guaranteeing dual citizenship to many foreigners. Herr Stoiber rightly calculates that this is deeply unpopular in Germany. His

Heads may have to roll in Brussels showdown

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

AT LEAST two European Commissioners — Edith Cresson of France and Manuel Marin of Spain — may be disgruntled and face serious pressure to resign in the showdown between the European Parliament and Commission.

As Jacques Santer, the Commission President, faces a censure vote in the Parliament tonight, Britain's Conservative group also wants confidence votes on other commissioners: Erkki Likanen (budget); Emma Bonino (humanitarian affairs); Anita Gradić (fraud investigation); and Christos Papoutsis (tourism). "Our aim is to allow Euro MPs to pin-point those commissioners responsible for the crisis," said James Elles, a British Conservative.

But the picture has been muddied by Pauline Green, the British leader of the Socialist group. She has threatened to call for a Socialist vote against the whole Commission if individual censure votes are carried.

Although Mme Cresson and Mr Marin have rejected responsibility for multimillion pound abuses in their administrations, there are signs from European Union governments that some commission heads may have to roll. Wil Kok, the Dutch Prime Minister, said at the weekend that an individual commissioner could not stay in office if a simple majority voted no-confidence in him or her.

The French Government is, how-

ever, backing Mme Cresson, a former Prime Minister, who is responsible for EU research spending, one area of alleged abuse. She has also been personally tainted by charges that she gave lucrative posts to an unqualified dentist friend and other close associates. Senior Marin, a Commission veteran with responsibility for huge aid spending, is singled out because of large-scale fraud in programmes under his charge and for alleged nepotism.

Along with the Commission, many MEPs have been taken aback by the ferocity of what many see as a catalogue of accusations.

THE Commission is under fire for a string of affairs (Charles Bremner writes). These are the main cases: No commissioners are alleged to have profited personally.

- Humanitarian aid: The Commission admitted last year that between 1993 and 1995 over £400 million in aid spending could not be accounted for. Manuel Marin of Spain was in charge at the time.
- Leonardo da Vinci: Under Edith Cresson of France, this £100 million-a-year youth training programme is alleged to have been mismanaged, with contracts going to suspect agencies.
- Nepotism: The Commission is accused of a culture of patronage

and cronyism. The most glaring scandals involve Mme Cresson.

- Group 4-Sécuritas: Eight commission staff are under police investigation for alleged corruption over a £10 million contract with the Belgian subsidiary of Group 4.
- Mediterranean aid: Multimillion-pound programme suspended in 1995 after allegations of chaotic administration and abuse. Partially reinstated. Run by Señor Marin.
- Cover-up: Critics say the Commission's fraud investigators are unwilling to pursue cases, and cover up the more damaging findings.
- Tourism: Three people are awaiting trial for alleged bribe-taking for contracts in tourism aid.

agencies still indulge in practices of cronyism.

The Commission's suspension of Paul van Buitenen, the Dutch auditor who blew the whistle on corruption, is seen as typical of the reflex of cover-up. Mr Santer's defiant rejection of all mismanagement charges last week only served to inflame MEPs' desire to make the Commission more accountable after years of disclosures of lax management in its handling of the £65 billion annual budget. Some senior officials have been appalled at the way that Mr Santer's private office, dominated by Luxembourgers, has panicked and thrown up a defensive wall, compounding the crisis with a high-handed stance towards the Parliament and media.

On the other side, the Parliament is hardly the model of democratic rigour. It has failed to clean up the shady practices, notably the scandalous expenses regime, that have forged its gravy-train image.

The week's events are a test for the European Parliament, which must demonstrate some coherence and avert the confusion that has marked its previous handful of attempts to confront the Commission since 1991. Senior MEPs from the big political groups hope the result will be a bloody nose for the Commission to spur it to accelerate internal reforms and accept a higher level of parliamentary scrutiny.

Olympic officials 'bribed with sex'

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES



Jokic resigned over corruption claims

CASH, 'kids' guns, scholarships — and now sex — are at the heart of mounting corruption allegations that have left the future of the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in doubt and brought the resignations of two top officials, with more heads expected to roll.

City officials who waded the International Olympic Committee as it considered where to hold the 2002 Winter Games used credit cards to pay for prostitutes for committee members from Africa and Latin America, according to allegations being investigated by the state Governor's office.

"I can confirm there are allegations of prostitution involving IOC members," the spokeswoman for Mike Leavitt, the Governor, said. Mr Leavitt, who has lashed out at the Salt Lake Organising Committee

in recent weeks, said of the sex claim: "It would be enormously disheartening if it were true."

Reports of bribes given to IOC members in the form of guns, ski payments of up to \$70,000 (£43,000) and university scholarships worth up to \$400,000 have all turned out to be true. As sex appeared to join the list, the Salt Lake committee's two senior officials, Frank Jokic and Dave Johnson, resigned on Friday.

City officials hope the resignations and the appointment of a new organising committee chairman — possibly Brent Scowcroft, the former White House National Security Adviser — will restore trust in the Games and help to bring in \$250 million still to be raised to meet a target of \$1.45 billion in corporate sponsorship.

The scandal has caused a wholesale loss of innocence for America's most self-consciously upright city, the capital of a 90 per cent Mormon state where, as Time magazine once put it, "all they do is eat, sleep and make money".

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LESSONS IN LONGEVITY



Looking forward to a contented old age: a healthy diet and regular exercise are among the things that each of us can do to extend our lifespan

Time to

AGE TRAP



Last year, on a visit to Budapest, it suddenly struck Tom Kirkwood that he was growing old. "I was standing on the top of a hill on a beautiful clear day, looking across at the Danube," he recalls. "Suddenly I realised I had floaters, little black specks in my field of vision. Here I was, gazing at

this scene of beauty and all I could think was, 'Golly, my eyesight isn't as good as it used to be, and one day I'm not going to be able to see this, and I'm not going to be able to see the people who mean so much to me'."

Kirkwood, an otherwise fit and trim 47, has more reason than most to be preoccupied by the ageing process. Professor of biological gerontology at Manchester University for the past five years, he is Britain's foremost expert on how and why we grow old.

His theory of ageing — that our bodies are designed to stay in reasonable condition only long enough to reproduce — has become a guiding principle in his field of research.

Yet, as he sets out in his liberating new book *Time of Our Lives*, an extract from which is reprinted opposite, the idea that we are expendable vehicles for reproduction does not necessarily mean that we should fall into decline after our reproductive years are over. Rather, he insists, there is much we can do to give ourselves an excellent quality of life into old age, and to extend lifespan. And just as no athletic record is seen as unbreakable, he thinks there is every chance that we will routinely live into our eighties over the coming decades.

Professor Tom Kirkwood, who read mathematics at Cambridge and decided after graduation that he was more interested in biology, was only 27 when he had, during a bath-time Eureka moment, the "disposable soma" idea for which he is now famous (soma means "body" in Greek). There are two types of cell in the body — those connected with reproduction, and those involved in body maintenance. There is only a limited pot of chemical energy for these cells to dip into. So there is a trade-off between reproduction and body maintenance. Evolutionary theory tells us that our purpose is to provide fit offspring, so the reproductive cells win in the trade-off. The body needs to be maintained only long enough to reproduce and look after children. Professor Kirkwood likes to think of ageing

as the "interplay between sex and death".

"The theory says that you can't have it all; you can't live forever and produce lots and lots of children," he says. Such an idea, originally from a young, relatively inexperienced biologist, seemed unthinkable. Until then, scientists believed we were programmed with a "death gene" and that there was nothing science or medicine could do about ageing.

Professor Kirkwood had serious doubts about that: "Animals in the wild usually starve or are eaten before they have the chance to age, so there is no need for a death gene."

The "Disposable Soma" theory, which says that ageing is just an accumulation of small biological breakdowns, challenges this fatalism. It has come to dominate gerontology over the last 20 years because it answers the question of why, as well as how, we age.

Moreover, it stands up to experimental scrutiny. Professor Kirkwood and colleagues in The Netherlands completed a study recently which examined family trees among the British aristocracy stretching back to AD40. Men and women with the smaller families, which at that time meant lower fertility levels, generally lived the longest.

The idea that we are not particularly designed to last beyond our reproductive years does not dismay him: "The theory tells us that we age because our genes do not place a high priority on us living beyond about 70. But we can



Professor Tom Kirkwood

NEVER TOO OLD:

Most of us can instantly picture the interior of a B&Q superstore — row upon row of paint, hardware, kitchen units, gardening equipment and all the rest. The lighting is harsh and the air reverberates to public announcements and recycled pop music. The essence of suburban, middle-class hell, some might think.

But for many older Britons, B&Q represents salvation — in the shape of jobs, at an age when few other employers are willing to take them on. In 1989, B&Q began recruiting for two new stores — in Macclesfield and Exmouth — to be staffed entirely by over-50s, and was astonished by the response. Two open days drew more than 500 people and there were more than 600 applicants for 50 jobs. Nationally, the jobs attracted 7,000 applications.

The experiment worked so well that B&Q decided to recruit over-50s in all its stores. Macclesfield and Exmouth are no longer exclusively run by older staff, but the lessons have been used to good effect. Of 22,000 B&Q employees, about 2,750 — or 13 per cent — are over 50. A quarter of the workforce is over 40. Advantages include lower absenteeism (a problem with younger staff) and the experience which comes with age. As one B&Q shopper comments: "It's like having a friendly neighbour giving you advice." They earn about £4.30 to £5.20 an hour.

Peter Cook, 67, a DIY adviser at B&Q in Wandsworth, southwest London, could hardly be better qualified for the job — he was previously a director of George Wimpey, the housebuilder. Today, well past retirement age, Mr Cook

keeps himself busy (and allows his wife some space at home) giving advice on everything from tools to garden sheds.

He landed the job four years ago, seeing an ad on a B&Q notice board. "I'd been retired and was terribly bored, but at the height of recession nobody was interested in plus civil engineer who spoke several languages. B&Q was looking for DIY advisers, and the one thing I know about is building construction."

B&Q's first employee, Reg Hill, 65, works in gardening at the St Albans store. Mr Cook says: "He had stopped working, he's in a box now, because the very fact that he's working keeps his mind active and it gives him objectives to follow each day. You don't age against: there's absolutely no reason about it."

Mr Cook earns a quarter of his former salary, but he says he doesn't feel that B&Q is exploiting its older workers. Pay is fixed in bands which are the same, whether one is 18 or 85. And he believes more older people will be hired in service industries, where they are particularly good at giving advice to the public. But the more physically demanding jobs in manufacturing will mostly be closed to them.

B&Q says that its customers respond well to a mixture of ages and experience. Martin Toogood, the company's UK managing director, says: "More mature employees are likely to have a different perspective on what constitutes good customer service. We often find that they spend more time with customers, helping them with their DIY inquiries." A B&Q spokesman

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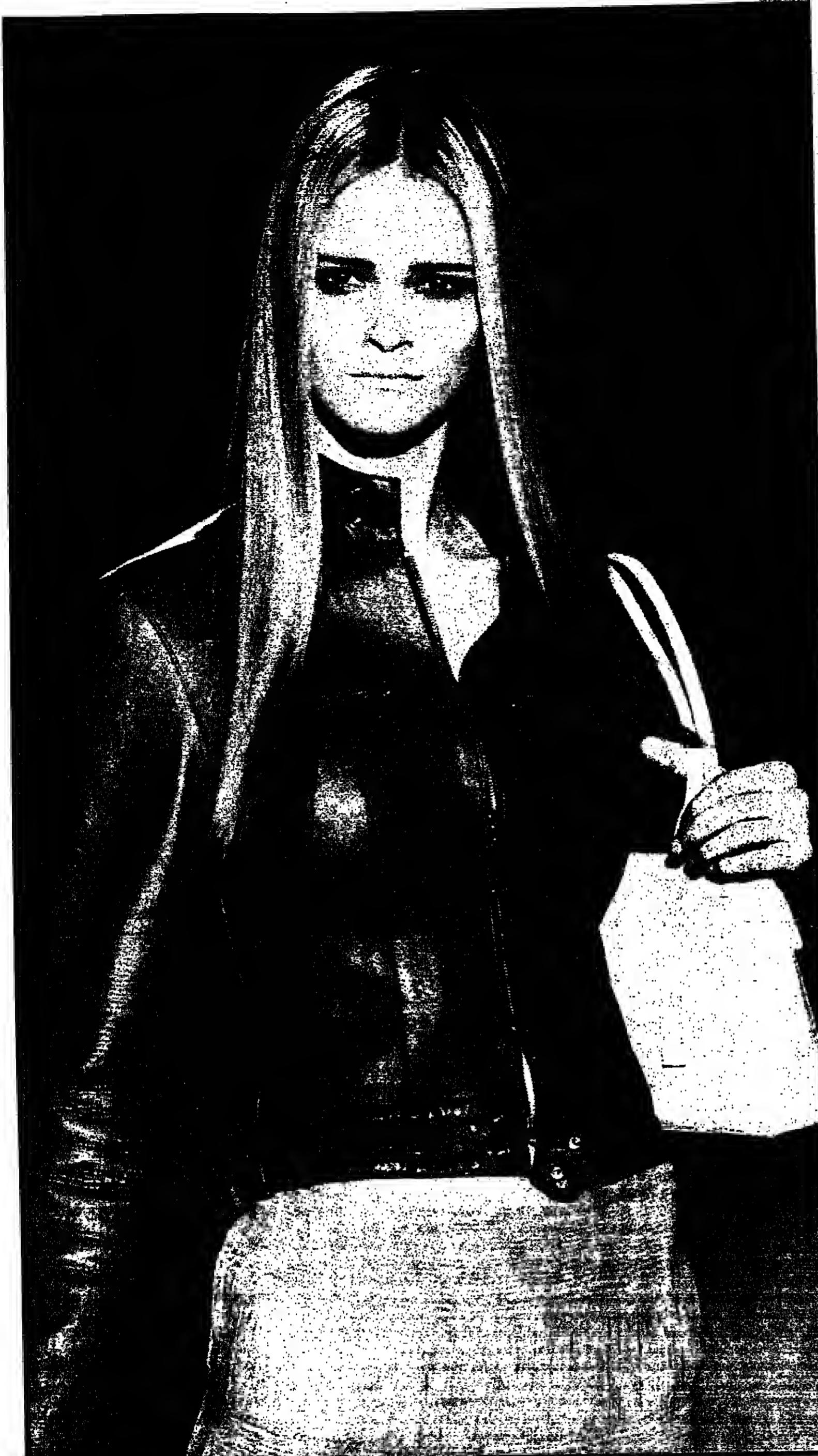
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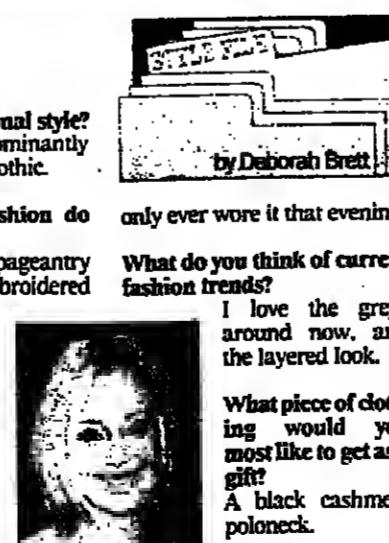
Describe your personal style?
Very eclectic, predominantly black and slightly Gothic.

What period in fashion do you love?
Medieval. I love the pageantry and the heavily embroidered brocade dresses.

What accessory/piece of clothing can you not live without?
My sunglasses. I get twitchy without them.

What are your pet hates?
I hate people who have loads of money but no style.

What is the most expensive item you have ever bought?
An Idol dress at £350. I bought it when I was pregnant to wear to the Bafta awards and I



What is your favorite shop?
I love French Connection and Morgan - brilliant items at affordable prices.

What is your style motto?
If you wear black you will never clash.

Toss that mane, straighten those curls. Suddenly it's OK to be a Seventies girl again

In the immediate excitement that greeted Tom Ford's hippy spring collection for Gucci last October, the models' hair seemed a minor footnote. But hair and make-up are never details in a business where a clever cut at the right moment can make a model's career and launch a million imitations. Looking back, it was clear that Ford meant his models' hair to be a statement - a very long one. Bone-straight, parted in the middle and apparently untainted by devous kinks of any kind, this was hair as we haven't seen it since. Ali MacGraw tumbled in the snow with Ryan O'Neal or Cher canoodled with Sonny, hair that signalled - dramatic as it sounds - a new mood.

The following weeks saw more agonised discussions about extensions than the aver-

age town planner has to deal with in a lifetime, for long, straight locks proved ubiquitous. Wave after wave of wavy girls with hair to match floated down the catwalks - neat and glossy as a preppy's loafers at Ralph Lauren; coiled and raggedly seductive à la mermaid at Jean Paul Gaultier; unconstructed and spontaneous (ie, only one-and-a-half hours under the dryer) at TSE ... and so it went on.

The impact of so much hair after 18 months during which seemingly two thirds of the female population succumbed to some form of Gwyneth Pal-

trou pixie crop has been surprising. For one thing, the newness that made short so appealing, so liberating and still, in a strange way, daring, was suddenly thrown into question.

The "now" models - Carmen,

Audrey, Aurelie, Angels -

blessed with conventional prettiness ... and ... waist-length

names, strolled down the world's catwalks with their

hair flying insouciantly be-

hind them and instantly made

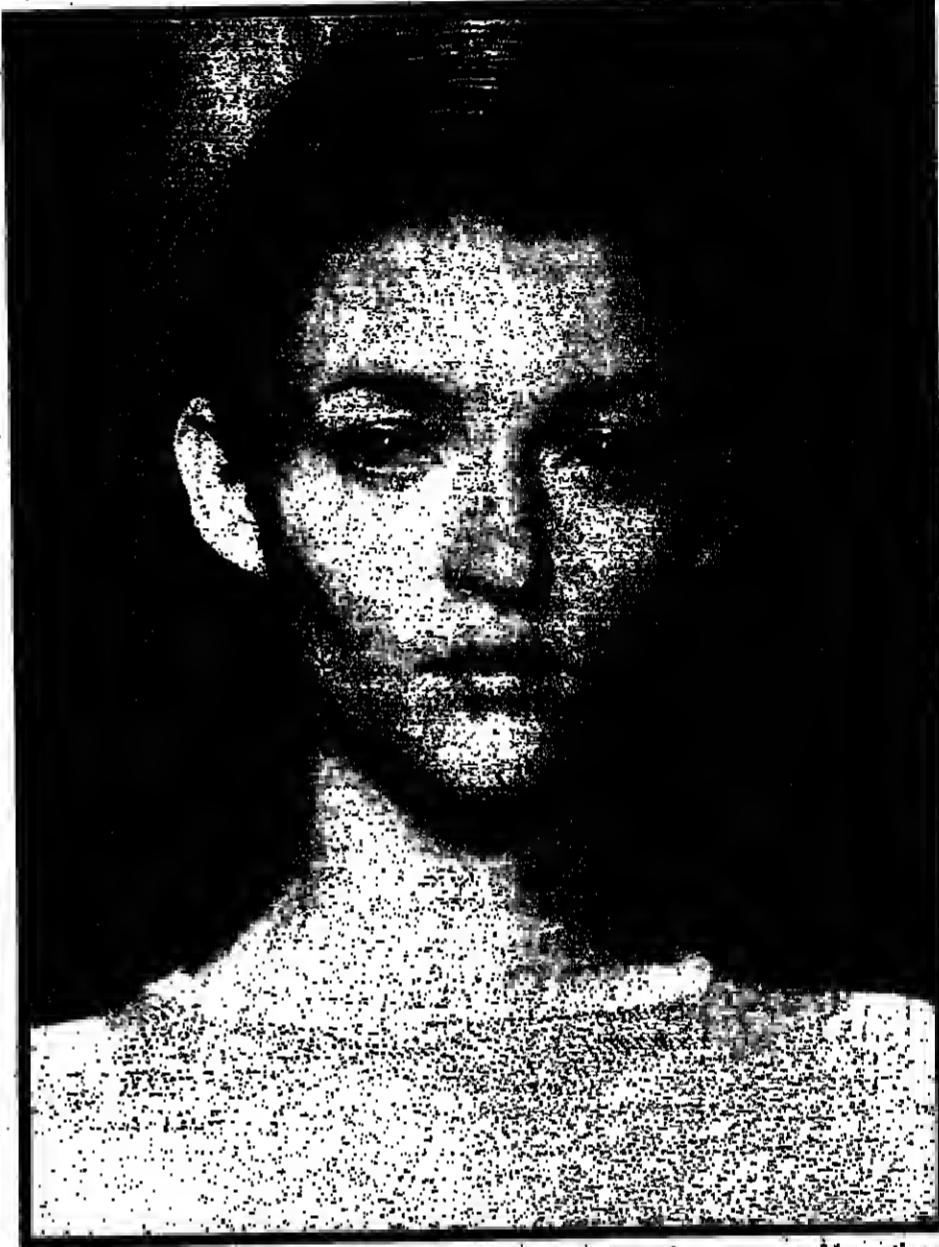
all those aggressive, edgy cuts

and paintbox dyeing tech-

niques seem tired and over-

wrought.

That said, women up and



Audrey at Lanvin displays this season's only deviation from the norm - a side parting



Trish Goff does Ali MacGraw at Ralph Lauren; Jean Paul Gaultier prefers mermaids



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the long, sleek and straight of it



down the land are unlikely to abandon their wash 'n' go chin cuts for something that requires straightening irons, gallons of styling serum, and hours under a hairdryer.

Nevertheless, something is in the air. Joel Gonçalves, the artistic director at John Frieda salons, says: "Clients are thinking about their hair in a different way. Madonna has just gone from a long, Pre-Raphaelite look to a very sleek, shiny one — and given that Hollywood's influence is so strong, that's bound to have repercussions. We are seeing a move away from bright, streaky highlights to subtle overall colour. What everyone asks for now is a healthy gloss."

There is a neat symmetry about the way that hair is going. The pretty, feminine clothes that wafted across the late Nineties fashion horizon — all those flower-trimmed cardigans, strappy high heels and gossamer skirts — were often teamed with gamine cuts. Now that clothes have taken a harder, more urban route, one that is signposted with Velcro fastenings, sports-inspired shoes and acres of nylon, hair has become whimsical, romantic, impractical and nostalgic: a case of fashion evolving with its own checks and balances in tow.

At any rate, a similar partnership between soft and hard, the wisful and the relentless new, occurred in the late Eighties. The power-dressed go-getter... who marched through the Thatcher years might have worn executive armour, but her favourite hair was voluminous, teased, and long. The message, whatever she might have thought she was signifying, was that while she may have been ready for a professional caught, she was, in her heart of hearts, a kitten.

Whether the return to long hair, at least as a catwalk ideal, represents some kind of backward step remains to be seen. As Dr Martin Skinner, a lecturer in psychology at Warwick University, remarks:

"There is something emotional and fragile-looking about long hair. Short hair indicates practicality, athleticism. Long, smooth hair symbolises the antithesis of all that — a Bambi-esque passivity. It is also a talisman of youth; as women get older, their hair tends to get wirier. Long, blonde, healthy-looking hair is even more elite, since for most adult women it simply doesn't exist. Wisp-

iness merely adds to the whole childlike effect."

At the end of the recent film *Elizabeth*, the (not very) virginal queen is portrayed cutting off her Titian locks to mark her passage from a young, available woman to a desexualised, impersonal monarch. This may be a 20th-century interpretation, but there has always been huge importance placed, however subconsciously, on the potency of hair in maintaining the delicate balance between our notions of masculinity and femininity, youth and old age, status and the lack of it. It was not until the end of the 16th century, for instance, that the Church ceased to have any influence over the way people wore their hair (men, unless they were French kings, were required to keep it short; and, implicitly, their vanity in check). Whenever there is a fashion revolution, hair turns up as chief agent provocateur, from the spikes of punk to the shingled bobs that accessorised the newly emancipated flapper, right back to the pious style of the Roundheads.

The fashion historian James Laver, pointing out that women's hair ballooned to cartoon proportions before the French Revolution, then became prominent again before the First World War when everyone dressed their voluminous chignons with cartwheel hats, goes so far as to suggest that hair fashions are fundamentally political. Giving so much prominence to the female head, he writes, "was not only a portent but a protest. The elaborate hairstyles were saying 'votes for women!'. After a great social upheaval, women permitted themselves very small heads as a sign that some kind of victory had been won."

At the end of a century in which women's hair has flowed down to the knees, been cropped like an Eton schoolboy's and shaved to conform to the idea of the non-conformist rock star, hair remains an emotive issue, inextricably bound up with personal identity. On the most pragmatic level, it defines a person's look more than any other element of their appearance. On another, says Dr Skinner, "it defines society. Think of the tight, rigid perms of the 1950s or the let-it-all-hang-out curtain hair of the Sixties and Seventies".

It is hardly surprising that in 1989, when Linda Evangelista allowed her Jeannine tresses to turn-of-the-millennium hair is predictably eclectic.



to be lopped off (spawning a wave of pre-Gwyneth paltrow acolytes), she wept. In the event, the neat, head-hugging outline accentuated the eyes and mouth that had never properly been noted before and finally catapulted her into the superleague. Nor does it seem strange that whenever women (and, increasingly, men) experience trauma (ending a relationship, changing jobs), they find themselves assuming a new hairstyle as an external barometer of their new status.

Turn-of-the-millennium hair is predictably eclectic, with a premium placed on visible signs of healthiness. If volumisers were the beauty industry's sexiest profit-earner in the Eighties, products that claim to impart shine are now one of the fastest-growing sectors of a £605 million market in the UK alone.

Men, simple creatures that they are, have always secretly preferred their womenfolk to have long and (what they fondly imagine to be) natural-looking hair. And every so often, women, whatever they may claim, enjoy the idea of being pampered creatures who can lavish absurd amounts of attention on their hair — especially, perhaps, now that time is so precious.

"The reality," says Joel Gonçalves, "is that over the next few months we will probably see hair that edges a little way down the ears — maybe even as far as the shoulders." But the dream will still prove pervasive.

Straightening irons might be a form of late 20th-century torture, but the fantasy of long hair is about to appear in a magazine near you. Enjoy it while it lasts.

HOW TO BE THE MANE ATTRACTION

THE top five secret agents in the quest for straight, sleek hair, whatever the length:

1 Creme Silk Groom, £15.50, by Kiehl's

2 John Frieda's Frizz-Ease Hair Serum, £5.99

3 Couture Care Seal and Shine Serum, £5.99, by Jo Hansford

4 Tec Ni Art Glass Shine Spray, £5.35, by L'Oréal

5 AC salon dryer by Charles Worthington, £22.99 —

a good weight, which makes it easy to use; very powerful, so the strong airflow and the hot dries the hair. It's chrome-plated, too, which makes it easy on the eye.

Serums, gels and sprays can add a delicate shine to long hair. Apply them before drying and use sparingly.

After drying, a few drops can be added to the palm of the hand and smoothed over heat-frazzled hair. The trick is not to go too heavy on the conditioner, and to use only a few drops or a couple of sprays to avoid the hair becoming weighed down by products. The aim is to acquire a healthy sheen rather than a stringy, greasy look.

A dry conditioner for stressed hair requires half an avocado, a single cream and olive oil mixed in a blender. Apply the mixture to the whole head and then wrap in clingfilm. Take a towel, wet it with hot water and wrap it around the head like a turban. When the towel gets cold, repeat the process another two to three times. Wash out thoroughly.

as if it is in a sauna. You can, of course, ignore all the protests from your partner and wear socks, but that seems antisocial. And however much designers try to spruce up hot-water bottles with cashmere or fake fur covers, there is nothing worse than waking up clutching an ice-cold bottle.

na Rubenstein, when they made a bit of money. Now, it seems, they just head straight for the most fashionable plastic surgeon in town.

■ THERE is no perfect way to deal with cold feet in bed. You can turn up the heating but the rest of you often feels

pastel bed slippers for £16. They may not fall into the man-pleasing category, but they will at least keep you happy.

There is another approach — invest in a supply of gingko biloba, a rainforest product that is said to enhance circulation. Since I never remember to take vitamins regularly, I cannot personally vouch for its efficacy. But Ruth Menston, one of London's most sought-after beauty therapists, swears by it.

When she arrived in Britain from Trinidad two decades ago, her toes became so frostbitten in the January cold that she developed gangrene and resorted to some very strange footwear to counteract it.

Then she discovered the magical gingko — which in those days was rather recherché, although it is now available in Boots — and the crisis was resolved.

Since gingko biloba is also meant to stimulate the brain, presumably the more you take it, the more chance there is of you remembering to take it regularly.

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CLINICS THROUGHOUT THE UK • ESTABLISHED 1991



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NOBEL UNKNOWN; CAMERON DIAZ; MARY SWAN; RYAN; ALL ACTION: RONALD GRANT

Julie Christie, bonfire in *Billy Elliot*

1966 Jean Shrimpton's Bambi look

WAGS: A blonde in a 1960s pompadour

1970s: Monroe in the sexual revolution

1980s: Madonna's hair fraction started it all

1990s: Spice girls

HAIR THROUGH THE AGES

Photo: Getty Images

■ SPRING PREVIEW

Shakespeare in love . . .

ARTS... and the brilliant
Rufus Sewell as Macbeth

Hot tickets and tips for the top

From *The Pajama Game* to *Parsifal*, from Travolta to Twyla Tharp: Times critics offer a selective guide to the delights of the spring season

America goes to war again in the epic *The Thin Red Line*Kate Winslet, sticking to dry land in *Hideous Kinky*

BUCKLE your seatbelts. It's going to be a rough ride for anyone hoping for a quiet life in the stalls between now and April. The big movies are awash with environmental scandal, vertiginous romances, family dysfunction, political ignominy, and enough whimsy to blow Richard Branson to Mars.

First over the edge is Warren Beatty in his own film, *Bulworth* (released Jan 22). Playing a US Senator whose pollies are sinking in a mud-slinging election, Beatty's Bulworth has a nervous breakdown, hires a hit man to kill him, and suddenly discovers a kamikaze freedom to tell unspeakable home truths to a bemused nation. Political mendacity is all the rage. Look at John Travolta. Having cultivated a taste for dirt in *Primary Colors*, he plays a lawyer who puts his career on the line in Steven Zaillian's *A Civil Action* (March 5). The sting here is that the story is true. Toxic chemicals dumped in the water supply of a small town near Boston have had tragic results. Tales of Oscar are coloured by talk of trials.

Family skeletons are taken in hand by Oprah Winfrey in Jonathan Demme's *Beloved* (March 5), written by Toni Morrison. Winfrey plays a struggling slave in rural Ohio, 1873, whose relationship with her daughter (Kimberly Elise) is threatened by the unwise adoption of Theodore Newcomb's charismatic Beloved. Sibling rivalry also infects Anand Tucker's intriguing biopic *Hilary and Jackie* (Jan 22). Here Emily Watson's genius cellist and sister-from-hell, Jacqueline

line du Pré, systematically puts her older sister (Rachel Griffiths) in the shade.

This is as nothing to the comic mayhem caused by the glamorous pairing of Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman in Griffin Dunne's *Practical Magic* (Jan 22). Inheriting witching powers, these two sisters cast Viagra-strength spells on men. Kathy Bates reprises some of the mad obsession of *Misery* in Frank Coraci's rites-of-passage tale, *The Waterboy* (April 30). In *Hideous Kinky* (Feb 5) Kate Winslet plays a single mom who takes her young daughters to Morocco in search of the meaning of life. In her first film since *Titanic*, she discovers that freedom and motherhood come at a price.

Terence Malick finally comes out of hiding to direct *The Thin Red Line* (March 5), an epic that promises to be one of the events of the year. This idiosyncratic view of the Second World War battle for Guadalcanal stars Sean Penn, Nick Nolte, Woody Harrelson and John Cusack.

On the period front, there is nothing to equal the glittering cast of John Madden's *Shakespeare in Love* (Jan 29). Joseph Fiennes plays the penniless, adulterous Bard who falls for Gwyneth Paltrow's Viola while he is writing *Romeo and Juliet*. The other towering romances of the season pair Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan in Nora Ephron's seamless feel-good movie, *You've Got Mail* (Feb 26), an Internet version of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mamma Mia!*, which brings Abba's music to a show about a wedding.

Dreyfuss surfaces at the Haymarket on March 17 in a staging of Neil Simon's raw comedy of domestic disaster, *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*. And spring should also bring the West End the admirable Geraldine McEwan in a major contribution to the Coward centenary, *Hay Fever*; Rachel Weisz in Tennessee Williams's *Suddenly Last Summer*; and Mamma Mia!, which brings Abba's music to a show about a wedding.

At the National Theatre you will find Trevor Nunn and John Caird's revival of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* (March 15), plus a rare staging of Bernstein's *Candide* (April 13), and a visit by Dublin's Abbey in Boucicault's melodramatic *Colleen Baun* (March 18).

The RSC continues transferring last year's Stratford

Gwyneth Paltrow busy catching the Bard's eye in the movie *Shakespeare in Love*. John Madden's glittering period piece with a cast including Joseph Fiennes, Judi Dench, and Antony Sher**THEATRE: BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE**Rufus Sewell for *Macbeth*

season to the Barbican Centre and the Young Vic — watch especially for C.S. Lewis's *Lion, Witch and Wardrobe* (March 18), *Sher in The Winter's Tale* (March 25) and Bernard-Marie Koltès's weird study of urban violence, *Roberto Zucco* (April 7) — and is pretty busy in Warwickshire too. Myself, I look forward with more than usual enthusiasm to seeing Josette Simon's *Titania* in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (March 25), Ray Fearon and Richard McCabe in *Othello* (April 2) and, at the Swan on April 20, Tim Supple's staging of Ted Hughes's *Tales from Ovid*.

What else catches the eye? In London, C.P. Taylor's shrewd tale of the Nazification of a decent man, *Good (Donmar, March 23)*, and the hugely controversial *Le Cid* that Declan Donnellan staged in Avignon last year (Riverside, Feb 16). Out of town, McKellen's Prospero in the West Yorkshire Playhouse's *Tempest* (Feb 2); Peter Bowles in a Mobil tour of Anthony Shaffer's *Stealth*; Fay Weldon's *The Four Alice Bakers*, plus previews of Simon Callow's revival of *The Pajama Game* (Birmingham Rep, Feb 23 and April 23); David Threlfall in Peer Gynt (Royal Exchange, Manchester, Feb 11); and Prunella Scales and Timothy West touring in Pinter's *Birthday Party*, opening at Salisbury Playhouse on February 18.

OPERA: RODNEY MILNESThe Royal Opera's delightful *Paul Bunyan* is revived

OPERA in London might have been a little thin on the ground following the Royal Opera's stashy/burn cancellation of its entire season, but something has been salvaged in the restoration of Francesco Zambello's delightful production of Britten's "American operetta", *Paul Bunyan*, which opens for a run at Sadler's Wells on April 23.

ENO is making the most

of the gap: a new production of *Parsifal* conducted by Mark Elder, directed by Nikolaus Lehnhoff and with a cast headed by Kim Begley, Kathryn Harrison and Gwynne Howell (Feb 13); Boito's *Mefistofele* in a new staging by Ian Judge (March 18); and a "controversial" production of Handel's *Semele* by Robert Carsen, conducted by Harry Bicket (April 19). There are high hopes for Ray-

diff. Peter Stein's new production of *Peter Grimes*, conducted by Carlo Rizzi, opens February 15 with John Daszak in the title role. Richard Jones's staging of *Hansel and Gretel*, so far performed only twice but seen by millions on TV, comes back into the Welsh repertory (Feb 26), joined by the late Göran Järvefelt's popular version of *La Bohème* (Feb 25).

In Glasgow there's a hugely inviting new production of *Der Rosenkavalier*, conducted by Richard Armstrong, directed by David McVicar, and with Joan Rodgers and Peter Rose as the antagonists (Feb 6), and Armstrong is also in charge of the first performance in these islands of Delius's *The Magic Fountain*, a characteristically exotic fantasy set amid the Indians of Florida (Feb 20) — two not-to-be-missed shows.

From next Friday Opera North will revive and tour Martin Duncan's production of Rossini's *Thieving Magpie*, with Mary Hegarty as the heroine, and on April 27 the company revives Simon Holt's *Locra opera*. The *Nightingale's Blame*, premiered last year in Huddersfield — a worthy piece difficult to bring off. And don't forget English Touring Opera, currently on a high: its spring tour is launched with Robert Chevara's new production of *Macbeth* at the Cambridge Arts Theatre on February 24.



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Monet fever at
the Royal Academy . . .

ARTS

■ SPRING PREVIEW
... and a dancing Don Juan

Pollock for your pleasure

VISUAL ART: RICHARD CORK

■ TO JUDGE by the stampede to buy advance tickets, Monet in the 20th Century at the Royal Academy is set to become the new year's most popular art show (Jan 23-April 18). Impressionism retains its overwhelming popularity, and Monet is the most-loved member of the movement. The British fascination with gardens provides another reason why this exhibition might well be an all-time record-breaker — for the survey concentrates on his latter years, when Monet grew obsessed with painting the flower beds, water-lilies and weeping willows he had planted at his home in Giverny.

A far more severe and classical French painter is reassessed in the National Gallery's Portraits by Ingres exhibition (Jan 27-April 25). But the show should be a revelation. Long neglected, especially by those who compared him unfavourably with his arch-rival Delacroix, Ingres is a supreme portraitist. Equally at ease with men and women, he is a master of design. But he can be deeply sensual as well, and his inventive originality ensured that he later found devotees even among Modernists as revolutionary as Picasso.

Living artists will not be neglected in the months ahead. Andreas Gursky, one of the most brilliant and unsettling photographers at work today, will be examined at the Serpentine Gallery

Jan 21-March 7). Steve McQueen, among the most impressive of young British artists, is having his first major show of films and sculpture at the ICA (Jan 29-March 21). Yinka Shonibare, a witty and subversive contributor to the Sensation exhibition, receives a substantial airing at the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham (Feb 10-April 5). And Richard Deacon, an outstanding middle-generation sculptor, is celebrated by the Tate Gallery Liverpool in a show of recent work never before seen in Britain (Feb 20-May 16).

Patrick Caulfield, among the finest and most consistently rewarding of our senior painters, will emblazon the Hayward Gallery with a much-deserved retrospective (Feb 4-April 11). Ranging over the whole of his tenacious 40-year career, the Caulfield show could easily win his cool explorations of urban interiors an even wider range of admirers.

Yet another facet of Picasso's seemingly limitless achievements will be revealed at the Barbican Art Gallery (Jan 29-March 25). Since he was fascinated by the camera's possibilities, and left behind more than 17,000 photographic works, it is surprising that no show has fully investigated his contribution to photography until now. The Barbican rectifies this omission and promises to offer a host of fresh insights into his inexhaustible creative process.



An untitled 1945 work by Jackson Pollock. The Tate Gallery's large retrospective of painting by "Jack the Dripper" is likely to be the most explosive show of the season

The most explosive show of the season, though, will surely be Jackson Pollock at the Tate Gallery (March 1-June 6). Despite his legendary reputation as the hard-drinking, short-lived innovator of dripped and spattered paint, Pollock has not been seen at full stretch in Britain for more than 40 years. So this survey, the sole European airing for the major retrospective recently displayed at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, might generate high excitement. Spectacular loans from across the world will ensure that "Jack the Dripper" is seen at his wild, orgiastic best. Not to be missed.

DANCE: DEBRA CRAINE

DANCE: DEBRA CRAINE

NOW no longer a full-time member of the Royal Ballet, Irek Mukhamedov stars in a new touring production for Arc Dance Company by Kim Brandstrup, "The Return of Don Juan" (March 1; Sadler's Wells). Mukhamedov plays the infamous philanderer, catapulted out of Hell and into a modern-day film studio where he is on a mission to seduce the last unseducible woman on earth. The Danish composer Kim Helweg provides an original score.

The Royal Ballet is preparing for its annual Dance Bites tour which this year features new works by Mark Baldwin, Michael Corder, Cathy Marston and William Tuckett. Two simultaneous tours open on March 1, one in Darlington (Civic Theatre), the other in Bath (Theatre Royal).

As its contribution to the Towards the Millennium festival, Birmingham Royal Ballet performs a triple bill (Sadler's Wells Feb 10, Birmingham Hippodrome March 3) which celebrates the Eighties.

The programme brings together David Birley's "Chorus", inspired by Ancient Greek dances, and his *Still Life at the Penguin Cafe*, a "veritable ecological extravaganza", with Twyla Tharp's exhilarating *In the Upper Room*. Performed by dancers in trainers and pointe shoes, this American masterpiece of momentum and energy is set to Philip Glass's popular minimalist score.

German dancer Pina Bausch returns to London for the first time in 17 years when she brings her Tanztheater Wuppertal to Sadler's Wells (Jan 27). She presents *Viktor*, an emotional roller-coaster of dance-theatre performed in front of a 24-foot earthwork. Sadler's Wells' hosts host to another foreign visitor when Pacific Northwest Ballet from Seattle comes to London (Feb 22-27) with Balanchine's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and a mixed bill of US choreographers.

When Derek Dean staged *Romeo and Juliet* at the Albert Hall in the round at the Mayflower



Irek Mukhamedov will star in a new touring ballet by Kim Brandstrup about Don Juan

June 1998 he went to town, utilising more than 120 performers. He is now reviving that production for English National Ballet's spring tour, downscaling it for a company of 64. It opens at the Mayflower

er, Southampton (March 1-6) before moving to Manchester (Palace, March 8) and Oxford (Apollo, March 15).

Northern Ballet Theatre unveils its new full-length *Carmen* at the Grand in

Leeds on February 22. Choreographed by Didy Veldman, and based on a scenario by the late Christopher Gable, it sets the familiar tale in the "dark underworld of contemporary Latin America".

MUSIC: RICHARD MORRISON



Rostropovich: triple echo

out the bunting for Alexander Goehr, who retires as professor of music after 23 years. A festival throughout the spring term features his music and that of his many distinguished pupils. And the Lahia Symphony Orchestra from Finland makes its UK debut with a fascinating Sibelius weekend (Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Feb 27-29), including the British premiere of his Violin Concerto in its original version.

Finally, two epics and an oddity. Simon Rattle's ten-year Towards the Millennium project reaches the 1980s, which means loads of Lutoslawski and Birtwistle, as well as another outing for the longest continuous orchestral piece in history: Nicholas Maw's 90-minute *Oxymoxsey* (Birmingham and London, throughout March). Mstislav Rostropovich revives memories of prodigious deeds of yore when he plays no fewer than three solo works with the LSO in one sitting, including a new Sofia Gubaidulina piece (this Wednesday, Barbican).

And, for music-lovers who think they have heard it all, the "world premiere concert programme" on a left-handed piano takes place at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on February 11. A sinister development, meanwhile, hangs

proposed to) by Shostakovich, comes out of the cold when the Royal Academy of Music in London mounts a festival (Jan 26-29) celebrating her 80th birthday. At last we can judge whether her talent justifies the claims made on her behalf. And Olivier Messiaen's widow, Yvonne Loriod, takes part in the BBC Symphony Orchestra's festival (Barbican, this weekend) devoted to the Frenchman's exotic and ecstatic paeans.

The University of Cambridge, meanwhile, hangs

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Blairism at a turning point

Tony Blair wants us to judge him and his Government on performance, not personalities. Fair enough. That is probably how voters will anyway judge him in two to three years, when recent lurid headlines will have been long forgotten. But Mr Blair's test is much more demanding than it appears. The main doubt about new Labour has always been its ability to deliver in office.

Of course, claims (exaggerated or real) about Cabinet infighting, about spin-doctors and about the private lives of ministers are damaging. Mr Blair has to be careful, not least in keeping a public distance for some time from Peter Mandelson, in both their interests. But the significance of these feverish stories is vastly exaggerated. The Tories understandfully see an opportunity to get their own back for many unfair and over-the-top criticisms they suffered. But such allegations do not decide the fate of governments.

The striking feature of the latest poll is how little impact the Mandelson affair has had on public opinion, not how much. The ratings of Mr Blair and Labour are still much higher than at the last election, and *higher than for* any previous government after 20 months in office. Moreover, any movement has been from Labour to the Liberal Democrats, rather than to the Tories. This suggests a mini-protest, rather than any fundamental shift in opinion.

Mr Blair obviously has to demonstrate that the Government has not lost its way and that his senior colleagues can work together. That should be relatively straightforward in the short term. The Cabinet is broadly agreed on the thrust of policy. No one serious is arguing for a change of approach, least of all John Prescott. A batch of new (and reheated) initiatives last week on numeracy in schools, fighting burglary and employment is intended to show the new Labour character of the Government.

The key question is about delivery. New Labour's main flaw has been its lack of rigour on policy making. Pre-election caution, to avoid charges of higher spending and taxes, meant that there was not enough serious thought about how to improve services. Instead, there were the five pledges. As Philip Gould reveals in *The Unfinished Revolution*, these were essentially campaigning devices which emerged from testing by focus groups of swing voters. However effective in electoral terms, the more specific ones, on NHS waiting lists and class sizes, were misguided. Almost no one except Frank Dobson and a couple of Blairite advisers believes the pledge on waiting lists is good health policy. It has distorted the allocation of resources, and along with serious weaknesses in nurse training and retention inherited from the Tories, has contributed to serious problems in hospitals. But the pledge has to be achieved before it can be abandoned, or modified.

In other areas, the Government has had to recognise that it will have to challenge vested — and often Labour-supporting — interests if it is to deliver improved services. I wonder how many Labour MPs understand or accept the implications of Mr Blair's remark

peter.riddell@the-times.co.uk

I was driving through the grey slush on a bleak country road near the godforsaken town of Klin (birthplace of Tchaikovsky) last week when my passenger remarked upon the large concrete slabs that line almost every road in the former Soviet Union. "Those things are hideous," he said, not without reason. "Well, the Soviets probably thought they looked modern," somebody else piped up from the back seat. "And that's all they have in the way of fencing," she added.

Here, everyone agreed, she had hit upon the problem. Russia does not have a supply-and-demand economy, it has a supply economy. The potential consumer's desires are irrelevant — you get what you are given.

Under Communism, and in

the early years of perestroika, if you saw a queue in the street you would join it without knowing what was on sale at the end of it.

People stood freezing for hours in the hope that a street trader's box of bath-sponges would not run out before they reached the front.

Essentially, if someone was selling it, you needed to buy it — macaroni, soap, oranges, toothbrushes. "I want some cream cheese," you might think. "Sorry madam, we've only got lightbulbs," the sales assistant might say. So, the next time you went shopping, you would know to ask for lightbulbs. Such would be the roaring trade in lightbulbs that the supply would be endlessly maintained, while cream cheese remained an unattainable dream. A supply economy which creates for itself the illusion of

demand is established. (In fact, both lightbulbs and cream cheese were equally hard to come by in the early 1990s, along with everything else.)

Things perked up a bit under Boris Yeltsin's presidency, but, since the catastrophic economic crash in August, factories have closed, uselessly, grim and ludicrously expensive industrial towns in the far North have been evacuated in their entirety and the former Soviet workforce is at a loss as to what to do with itself.

The vast and long-since superfluous staff of factories making televisions to 1960s standards demand in vain that their back

wages be paid and their jobs be returned to them. Although they, at least, have something with which to barter privately, old televisions. The scientists and technicians populating the hundreds of secret cities all over Russia are not so lucky, unless one counts the odd container of plutonium known to be readily available to the determined.

Barter as payment now accounts for 80 per cent of the economy and it can be a dirty game. On January 4, Estonia announced a decision to grant the Russian town of Ivangorod, situated on its border, 721,000 krore of what it described as

"humanitarian aid" with which to pay off Ivangorod's debt to the Estonian town of Narva for water supply and sewage system services.

Having accrued a debt of \$1 million since Estonia's independence, the Russians, whose water and sewage disposal was finally cut off on January 2, threatened to dump their sewage into the Narva River to be carried to the Bay of Finland. The Estonians backed down and accepted their own money as payment for their own services.

In Cheyabinsk, a company that, among other things, constructs metro systems, was unable to pay its taxes, so the Cheyabinsk authorities ordered the company to construct them a

metro system. Whether or not Cheyabinsk needed a metro did not come into the equation. Lada factories continue to churn out 1950s Fiats with the same ancient equipment. Why? Because that is what they do.

Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Prime Minister, is keen to stabilise the country's devastated economy and to stop the rubble plummeting much lower than its present rate of 22 to the dollar. But the day when old ladies in dusty uniforms stop watching metro escalators simply because they have always been escalator watchers, and when demand for cream cheese or lightbulbs results in an abundance of cream cheese and lightbulbs, still seems a long way off.

comment@the-times.co.uk



MARGARET COOK: A SLIGHT & DELICATE CREATURE

Boys will always be boys

Both Cook and Clinton show an innate childishness that could only end in tears

man but one who calculates the odds as carefully as Sky Masterson, cannot afford to lose two senior ministers in one month. This security is, however, temporary. Mr Cook is now an embarrassment not an asset to the Government at the next reshuffle, or the one after, he will be dropped, and nobody imagines that he will ever hold office again.

It is the same with Bill Clinton. He may, or may not, survive the impeachment proceedings before the Senate. If he does, he will struggle through another couple of years as a discredited President, without reputation and with little political weight.

Both men know that history will be kinder to them, though the scale is different. It is one thing to have been President of the United States, and another to have been the British Foreign Secretary for two or three years. Of course, failure is more bitter in the desert war.

That is sad enough. Margaret Cook shows a good deal of self-pity, for which one cannot blame her. Hillary would be entitled to self-pity as well, and probably feels it from time to time. Some of it is bound to emerge when her memoirs are published. Yet the paradox is that one comes away from reading the extracts in *The Sunday Times* feeling some pity for Margaret, but even greater pity for Robin. It is not only that his ambitions are dribbling away, like a petrol can punctured by a bullet in the desert war.

That is sad enough. It is not only that the book is written to shame him and succeeds in its aim only too well. It is that every sentence shows that Margaret is strong, and Robin is weak, as immature men can be weak. Fairly or unfairly, we feel pity for the weak, even when they prove venomous, more than for the strong.

In the past week I had been wrestling with this problem of compassion in its most extreme form. I was thinking partly about Clinton, about his psychological emptiness, about his traumatic childhood with the devoted but dysfunctional mother and an alcoholic stepfather. I happened also to be reading the opening chapters of Ian Kershaw's fascinating new life of Hitler. They discussed Hitler's childhood and the origins of his megalomaniac fantasies.

Adolf Hitler was the only surviving son of a devoted mother and an abusive and heavy-drinking father, who was 23 years older than his wife. Four of their children died in childhood; a sister, Paula, lived

until 1960. She and the family doctor, Eduard Bloch, who was Jewish, are the main authorities for Hitler's early childhood. After the war, Paula, who never exploited her position as sister of the Führer, spoke of her mother as "a very soft and tender person ... it was especially my brother Adolf who challenged my father to extreme harshness and who got his sound thrashing every day." Hitler himself said that his beloved mother lived in constant concern about the beatings.

Hitler's father died when he was 13, his mother four years later. Both Paula and Dr Bloch testify to Hitler's "indefatigable" care for his mother when she was dying of breast cancer. After his father's death, Hitler dropped out of school and lived a hippy-like life of fantasy in Vienna. When one reads Ian Kershaw's account, one cannot avoid feeling compassion for the sufferings of this abnormal but gifted boy, as well as being aware of the terrible consequences of his fantasies.

Bill Clinton and Robin Cook are no Hitlers, but in each case something fundamentally seems to have gone wrong. Bill Clinton had disastrous parenting; we do not know the psychological cause of Robin Cook's unhappiness, but he has plainly been very unhappy. Margaret Cook describes his reaction to his discovery that he had no support for the Labour leadership after John Smith's death. "He sank into the deepest despondency ... he talked of the paradox that Labour could well win the next election and that he would then be in the Cabinet, but he felt anything other than elated." At the time this was apparent to the most casual observer. I remember passing Mr Cook in 1996 on the pavement outside St Stephen's Yard: he was alone in his thoughts, his expression was one of depression, of an inward-looking despair.

Indeed, Robin Cook is a tragic figure. One can feel sympathy for the anguished child that is somewhere inside him, and for his lost hopes. But he cannot last long as Foreign Secretary, and little good can come of his remaining months in office. He is not new Labour; he is not old Labour; he is not the future of Labour. Perhaps it is a pity that Peter Mandelson has gone; of the two men he was the one whose political future was worth saving.

comment@the-times.co.uk

Drama Queen

FATHER-in-law to a prince may about to be, but Christopher Rhys-Jones (below left) is treated with little regal respect. "He was appear-



ing in a play at the memorial hall," says a source in Brenchley, his Kent village. "One scene required him to eat a piece of Turkish delight lying on the floor — but a joker had sprayed it with WD40. Christopher was furious and stormed out, never to grace the stage again." Matrons at the Brenchley Drama Group decline to comment, but one aggrieved member says: "It's a damn shame. The Queen might have come to see our productions."

• LESS gripped by wedding fever is Dame Barbara Cartland (above). "It does seem a rather dull business," opines the pink dame, tiring of the love game, being 97 and all. But surely Prince Edward is fairly exciting? "He is very young and I've never met him, at least I don't think so." But mat'am, you must approve of Sophie, striking for feminism by continuing to work! "Royals are expected to behave royally," she argues penetrantly. "I don't want to go to a wedding like that," I urge royal sorts to send Babs a stiffer.

Meal ticket

THAT late-night exercise enthusiast Ron Davies is not letting his little awkwardness on Clapham Common get between him and God. The exiled King of Wales is to make his first speech since his career blip at a "lunchtime conversation" in the City at Wesley's Chapel. Should he feel moved by the confessional



atmosphere to relive his "meal" (sic), I trust the brokers in the congregation will show their customary sensitivity.

Bed panner

THE splendid Ann Widdecombe is resorting to guerrilla warfare to attack Government bed-snatchers. Ann Keen MP, a Labour toiler, was hanging on about why we do not need more hospital beds (a change there, surely?) on a Sky phone-in and then the delicious Ann called. She unzipped her grenades and blew apart the bed-snatchers' case. Afterwards, Mrs Keen was said to look quite pale and very cross.

• OH, no. Wendy's comeback has gone belly up. I hear that his namesake best friend, the Prince of Wales, has not given the resignation "more than a moment's notice".

JASPER GERARD



THE COOK BOOK

Public and private lessons for the Foreign Secretary

Robin Cook is a powerful analyst of impersonal forces. In the Labour Cabinet he is dominant in the realms of language and ideas. He is a man of both single and independent mind. His virtues certainly fit him to be Foreign Secretary and his vices, even those so viciously set out by his ex-wife yesterday, do not detract him.

Whether he can maintain his position in the fractious, febrile administration that is the new New Labour is still debatable. Even before yesterday's attacks, Mr Cook was famous for ending his marriage of 29 years in 1997 in a Heathrow VIP lounge, with a newspaper about to reveal, his longstanding affair with his secretary, a wife with her holiday bags packed and a Downing Street press officer's pencil held to his head. When told to choose between wife and mistress, he brusquely discarded his wife, an action which, while easily explicable to a Pitt or Palmerston, carries a whiff of callous self-indulgence that has not often widely been admired.

Wide admiration is something which modern governments, most especially this modern government, actively seek. Mr Cook must have been nervous, therefore, about the publication of his wife's autobiography even though she could arguably do him no damage that he had not already inflicted on himself. Margaret Cook has not landed her punches as lightly as she disingenuously claims; what partner to a bitter divorce ever does? Yesterday's newspaper extract was an unappetising catalogue not just of allegedly serial infidelity but of political jealousies, overweening vanity and episodes of lost self-control. But aside from her allegations of past drinking and pill-popping, there is little, including his reciprocated antipathy to Gordon Brown, that was not already public knowledge.

Diplomacy is Mr Cook's job; and it is as a diplomat, in the broadest sense of that term, that he must in future be carefully judged. He needs to be able to bring people behind him for the British interest, not just his own people but other politicians and diplomats. In this sphere of human relations, where his former wife dismisses him as a man of "no natural courtesy and sympathy", she is not the only observer to find the Foreign Secretary wanting.

Mr Cook, so brilliant an exploiter of weakness in Opposition, has been un-

steady himself at the Foreign Office, a portfolio that at first seemed almost to hold in contempt. His clumsy attempt to appoint Gaynor Regan, now the second Mrs Cook, as his diary secretary was a crass, if minor, misjudgment that symptomatised a disdain for the institutional environment. The damage he has inflicted on the internal morale and international standing of the FO is likely to be the main thrust of the criticisms directed against him tomorrow, when the Foreign Affairs Select Committee takes testimony from the prematurely retiring Sir David Gore-Booth — the diplomat whose sad fate it was to be High Commissioner to India when Mr Cook's indecent handling of Kashmir marred the Queen's visit in controversy.

Sir David is himself hardly the most sensitive soul in the service — he is before the committee to rebut the Ombudsman's verdict on his handling of an incident when he was Ambassador to Saudi Arabia — but he speaks for a wide constituency of officials unhappy with Mr Cook's cavalier attitude to briefings, with his tendency to blame subordinates for his not infrequent blunders, and with what is seen as a counterproductive obsession with "rebranding" the Foreign Office. The cooler Mr Cook sets out to make Britannia's outposts, it is argued, the more he perpetuates tired clichés of British diplomacy as a bastion of chinless privilege.

There is substance to these charges, as there is to the view that Mr Cook's video-launched ethical foreign policy genuinely distorted the pursuit of British interests. If he is to stay at the Foreign Office, he needs to mend relations with its staff quite as much as he needs to rebuild bridges in Cabinet. There is some evidence that he has recently tried harder than before to put his back into his job, and may even be starting to enjoy it. That is in his own interest as well as Labour's; it is hard now to see him rising beyond that role.

The Cabinet would not be the stronger for his departure. There is need for a heavyweight counter to the Chancellor, particularly on EMU where Mr Cook's sceptical eye is a valuable presence. One hope around which the Labour leadership should rally is that this thorny but talented minister can bring an end to this time when he has been an understandably distracted man.

NURSING FOR NURSES

A proper career structure is as important as pay

Lack of recruits to any profession is usually blamed on one factor: pay. That is assumed to be the case with the current shortage of nurses. Eight thousand are needed to fill hospital vacancies. Yet a sudden increase in nurses' pay is unlikely to result in a sudden rise in numbers of recruits or to ease the hospitals' immediate predicament. The Health Secretary, Frank Dobson, must tackle all aspects of the profession with the same radicalism that David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, has shown towards teaching. Failure to do so will threaten reforms whose implementation depends on there being enough nurses.

Nurses' pay lags behind that of other public services; a junior nurse is paid 17 per cent less than a new teacher. Yet simply promising an inflation-busting wage increase would be a short-sighted response — and one that Gordon Brown is likely to resist. Any pay rise should be conditional on reform of the existing straitjacket of grades and pay scales. Nurses' salaries take too little account of any added responsibilities, and the system prevents them from earning more than £20,000 unless they move into management.

The best recruits will enter nursing only if it offers a secure career progression, rewarding skills and expertise. At present there is no formal fast track promotion scheme. Such ideas were sketched out by the former Health Minister, Alan Milburn,

before his promotion to Chief Secretary. The complaints they provoked from nursing unions should not deter Mr Dobson from giving them further thought. Flexibility in pay should be accompanied by more adaptable working practices — the providing of crèches, for instance, or the matching of shifts with the school day.

Ministers should also take a fresh look at nurses' training. Fourteen per cent dropped out last year. Could this rate be lowered by tailoring training more closely to the level of skills required, allowing some nurses to become experts in certain fields, and others to learn as apprentices on wards? Yet Mr Dobson cannot wait the three years it takes for a nurse to be trained. Quite apart from the existing 8,000 vacancies, a quarter of all nurses will reach retirement age next year.

Although he considers the practice an "international disgrace", Mr Dobson should be thankful that people are willing to come to Britain and work in a hospital at the current level of pay. He should welcome them — and offer to train them, too. He must do more, too, to lure the 77,000 nurses who have left back into the profession. Schemes to retain them already exist; but financial incentives are needed. Nursing reform is not only a necessary part of the Government's modernisation project, but also a pressing political need if cries of "crisis" are not to continue to emanate from hospital wards.

EVER YOUNG

Fiction handles ageing better than modern societies do

Europe's most famous reporter turned 70 yesterday, but still retains the childlike looks, boyish enthusiasm and sexless energy that have won him admiring fans around the world and have sold 170 million copies of 22 books in 51 languages. Tintin is not only that rare example of a famous Belgian; he has become a figure so bemusingly real to all those who have followed him across remote deserts, down darkened corridors and to the outer reaches of the seas and the heavens that scientists and legislators are loath to admit that he is a mere figment of an illustrator's imagination. The French parliament has staged a debate in which each faction will claim him for their own. Psychoanalysts delve into Tintin's ambiguous sexuality. And scholars compile genealogies of the philosophy, social significance and *Weltanschauung* of the hack, his quiff and his dog.

A ruder and less complex navigator through this troubled world also turns 70 this year with the promise of long-delayed matrimony. Popeye is finally to marry Olive Oyl after a courtship that must rank as the longest and most rancorous in all seafaring history. The ceremony will take place on the isle of Spratnachania, and all Hollywood's gossip columnists are waiting

to see whether the pipe-smoking old seadog will settle down with his new family, including the already adopted youngest member, Swee' Pea.

The two explorers — the childhood equivalents of *The Archers*, reappearing with timeless regularity — have now passed pensionable age, but are as actively engaged in life as they were when comic strips were young and celluloid a novelty. Those of more solid flesh and blood, however, find that age presents more formidable barriers. However well they preserve their bodies, their energies and talents are all too often ignored or disparaged by today's youth-obsessed society. Ageism is an ugly word, but it denotes an uglier phenomenon. It is the opposite of what most cultures in all places and all ages have inculcated: respect for the old, honour for the wise and roles for all.

Luckily, a growing movement recognises the foolishness of this shallow worship of youth. Older people are increasingly being brought back to the workplace, the television screen and the voluntary organisation. Their experience enriches us, just as those whose fictional lives have reached 70 entertain us. Isn't it time, however, that just a few wrinkles appeared on Tintin's brow?

Letters may be faxed to 0171-782 5046, e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Call for 'honesty' over euro policy

From Mr George Thomas

Sir, Now that the euro has been launched, this country should decide once and for all, and without delay, whether it wants to be in or out of the European Union.

There can seldom have been an issue over which we have so needed, but have never had or been less likely to get, honest government honest government being government that is quite truthful about the anticipated outcome of its policies.

One thing that is now clear, after years of obfuscation, is that the EU intends to become a federal state. In some ways it already has more federal powers than the federal Government of the US and we already know that these will increase.

Countries that are neither in nor out — those not converting to the euro — will suffer the worst of both worlds. If they prosper they will be accused of unfair practices and will be "punished" and the cause of their success negated. Not being independent, they will be unable to defend themselves and their success will turn to failure.

Failure from the outset is more likely, however, because Euro-bureaucracy and rules make successful trading outside euroland, for all but a few very large or very specialised businesses, almost impossible. For the UK this will be particularly damaging.

There are arguments for being in and for being out of the euro/EU, but the argument advanced in both Government and Opposition that we should "wait and see" will be so harmful that you have to wonder at their motives.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE THOMAS,
17 Campden Hill Square, W8 1JY.

From Mr Lance Anisfeld

Sir, The two most commonly heard economic arguments in favour of the single currency are the reduction of foreign exchange costs for industry and the deflationary price differences across Europe which it will reveal. Both these arguments are bogus.

Costs for one business are revenues for another. With fewer foreign exchange transactions, banks and foreign exchange dealers must surely lose out by an equal amount to the gains for industry. The net effect on business will be completely neutral.

Priore differences have always existed and always will. However, sophisticated consumers know how to take advantage of them, and it is much more likely that the development of Internet technology will increase real global competition than — as is sometimes patronisingly argued — that the redenomination of prices will spare consumers the need to get out their calculators. The beer trips across the Channel prove that they are not that ignorant where gains are to be had.

It is now very clear that political integration is what most pro-Europeans clamour for. I too am a pro-European, one who wants Europe to grow peacefully and democratically — which is why I completely oppose what is now happening in continental Europe. Forget the mild disaster of the ERM. Look what has happened to other European federations in the last ten years — namely the USSR and Yugoslavia. A federal superstate is doomed to collapse and possibly civil war.

I pray for my children's sake that we remain independent and stay out.

Sincerely,
LANCE ANISFELD
(Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, 1991-92,
33 Linden Lea, N2 ORF.)

From Mr Robert Woollard

Sir, I disagree with Mr Stan Snowdon (letter, January 5) that the small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) would benefit by being inside euroland.

Oskar Lafontaine let the cat out of the bag when he put tax harmonisation firmly on the agenda (leading article, November 28). This doesn't suit the British electorate, let alone Britain's SMEs. I suspect that the executive director of the Federation of Small Businesses (letter, January 1) understands this.

I formed my own SME almost 30 years ago. Our overseas business is nearly always transacted in US dollars. If anyone wishes to deal in euros I have no problem. However, for this country to give up 1,000 years of economic and political independence in order to prove that we are good Europeans is daft.

The euro is but a few days old. Europe as it stands is largely socialist and needs to change dramatically. If you asked me to choose today between euroland and the US dollar region, there is only one choice: to apply for membership of the North American Free Trade Agreement immediately.

In a few years' time the story may be different. Let's wait and see how this experiment pans out — we have little to lose and much to gain.

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT WOOLLARD
(Chairman/Managing Director,
Cascom Limited,
Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 8BV.
January 5)

Christ 'made-over' as Che Guevara

From Mr Ernest B. Scalabrin

Sir, While I am delighted that people recognise Jesus as a radical, and not the wimp he has often been depicted as in paintings and movies, to present him in the image of a revolutionary like Che is another to Christ's mission on earth. Jesus was very careful to instruct his followers that His kingdom was not of this world and would not be brought about by the means of this world, like violent revolution.

It strikes me that the "Che" Jesus is an inappropriate as the monk and mild version that we have become used to. When Jesus called his followers to go into the world and make disciples of all nations (Matthew xxviii, 19-20), he did not call them to change or re-invent his image according to popular culture. If he is who he says he is, and I and so many others believe he is, he doesn't need earthly make-overs to promote himself.

Sincerely,
ERNEST B. SCALABRIN,
311 High Street,
Northvale, New Jersey 07647.
enjudy@jolt1.com
January 7.

From Mrs Ermina E. Bosch

Sir, Ernesto Che Guevara was a failure in everything he attempted: a failed medical student, a failed revolutionary in his native Argentina, even a failure at working for Fidel Castro in Cuba after the takeover of January 1959. He died because of his own incompetence after leading his group into a jungle without food or supplies.

It really doesn't matter if church leaders don't relate to this campaign — it's not designed for them. What matters is that an opportunity created for a public discussion of the meaning of the death and resurrection of Jesus should not be sacrificed on the altar of ecclesiastical correctness.

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD THOMAS
(Communications Director,
Diocese of Oxford,
Diocesan Church House,
North Hinksey, Oxford OX2 0NB.
January 6.

Cromwell escutcheon

From Mr T. P. J. Edlin

Sir, The taffy escutcheon taken from Oliver Cromwell's hearse by Robert Uvedale in 1658 (report, January 5) is currently in the possession of Westminster School. Uvedale's *alma mater*.

As you report, Uvedale, a 16-year-old scholar at the school, darted between the soldiers guarding the bier and snatched from it the little silk banner — known at the school as the Majesty Scutcheon — disappearing with it into the crowd of his school-fellows before anyone could recover from the shock of surprise and catch him.

Having been preserved by the Uvedale family for over 300 years, the boy's souvenir passed into the hands

of a descendant, Miss Mary West, by whom it was given to the school in 1964, since when it has hung outside the Head Master's study.

John Carleton, Head Master at the time of the gift, has described the theft as not merely an act of bravado by Uvedale but an expression of the school's indignant feelings at the lavish honour being paid to one he had been taught to regard as a usurper.

Uvedale himself (1642-1722) went on to become a skilled cultivator of exotic plants, owner of one of the first hot-houses in England, and author of a 14-volume herbarium.

Yours faithfully,
T. P. J. EDLIN,
Merton College,
Oxford OX1 4JD.
January 6.

Pig farmers' plight

From Mr Robin Bear

Sir, The sad plight of British pig farmers is well expressed in the letter from Paul Cross (January 4), highlighting the excessive profits made by the supermarkets at the expense of the producer and of the retail customer.

Nevertheless our supermarkets display a multitude of imported pig products in the form of a chopped, cured sausage commonly known as "salami". Milano and Felino from Italy, chorizo from Spain, saucisson sec from France, hierwurst from Germany are only a few examples of an interesting product produced by every European country other than Britain.

Our pig farmers should broaden their horizons and think beyond bacon, ham and pork. Why do we not have an English rival to Parma ham?

Yours sincerely,
ROBIN BEAR,
Scrags Farm,
Cowden, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 7EB.
January 4.

Some talk of . . .

From Major David Scowcroft

Sir, Each morning I walk past the impressive array of military hero statues in Whitehall on my way to paperwork in the Stalinesque MoD main building. The statue of Raleigh outside it is not overwhelmed by its neighbours but stands in modest distinction.

The requirement is not its removal, as is suggested from time to time (letters, August 12, 19 and 22, 1996), but the positioning of a similar-size statue to achieve symmetry. The monument should be to one not as August as Montgomery but of a modest military background. (My own military career, for instance, is exceedingly modest.)

Yours sincerely,
DAVID SCOWCROFT,
Ministry of Defence,
Room 4158, Main Building,
Whitehall, SW1A 2HQ.
January 4.

From Mr P. W. Estling

Sir, MDCCCCCXCVIII or MIM? The problem for the Roman stone mason was a very simple one: Am I being paid *per horam* or *per opus*?

Yours,
PETER W. ESLING,
3 Llysnewydd Cottages,
Drefach Felindre,
Llandysul, Dyfed SA44 5UT.
January 6.

From Mr G. D. Clarke

Sir, Jumbo crosswords for Christmas Eve, Boxing Day, Bank Holiday, New Year's Day, new year weekend — this is sheer sadism. My social life is in ruins and I haven't finished one yet.

Can we not come to some agreement whereby you publish, say, one a week and I stop writing you letters?

Yours faithfully,
G. D. CLARKE,
31 Crutchfield Lane,
Walton-on-Thames,
Surrey KT12 2QY.
January 2.

Sound and fury

From Mr Robin Stephenson

Sir, Environmental health inspectors in Warrington, Cheshire, are investigating an intermittent wh

OBITUARIES

Frederick William John Augustus Hervey, 7th Marquess of Bristol was found dead yesterday aged 44. He was born on September 15, 1954.

The Hervey family has produced several notable rogues over the centuries from the 18th-century Earl-Bishop of Derry, who amused himself by having the plumpest persons in his diocese race through a bog for a particularly rich and vacant living (only to give it to someone else), to the 6th Marquess, who was jailed for three years for jewellery theft in the 1930s and who decided to sell guns to the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War and then betrayed them to the French. But son of the latter and the 7th Marquess of Bristol could compete with any of them.

Historians and genealogists could make much of the fact that almost every aspect of John Bristol's personality and behaviour had extensive precedents in his well-documented family history, although it should be noted that the Herveys of the 19th century were models of propriety. But, whether or not he was ultimately a victim of heredity, Bristol's life remains a tragic tale of an intelligent man who destroyed himself through excess. His addictions to cocaine and heroin left him a very sick man while still in his thirties, got him sent to prison twice and played a major role in the squandering of an immense fortune.

Frederick William John Augustus Hervey was born heir to the

splendours of Ickworth House in Suffolk in 1954 to Victor, 6th Marquess of Bristol and his first wife Pauline (née Bolton). The collapse of his parents' marriage when Johnny, as he was known to friends and family, was five, provided him with the classic background for later waywardness, but he was the first to point out that much of his childhood was remarkably happy. His father's second wife, Juliet Fitzwilliam, and Teddy Lambton, the race horse trainer whom his mother married after her divorce, were warm and generous step-parents.

Johnny's relationship with his father was always difficult, even if the allegation that the 6th Marquess had compelled his son to wear long white gloves on a daily basis, made by his defence QC in his trial for possession of heroin and cocaine in 1993, was as Bristol himself claimed, the first that he had ever heard of it. His father was a cold man who considered himself above the rules governing the rest of society, and he passed these characteristics on to his son.

Johnny Hervey was educated at Harrow, where he was a contemporary of the Marquess of Blandford, who was to become his main rival as Britain's most notorious peer. He completed his education at Neuchâtel University in France, the boy's equivalent of a finishing school. At the age of 18 he inherited more than a million pounds from a trust fund. The freedom this afforded him did not combine well with the appetite for excess and the self-destructive streak he had inherited, and he quickly became in-

volved with drugs, at first cocaine and later heroin, through a "fast" set of wealthy friends at Oxford University.

Until he was 24 Hervey managed to combine an escalating drug habit with full-time employment at first at Donaldson's estate agents and later running a Rolls-Royce dealership and working at a small bank. But in 1978 he moved to Paris, and from that point on was essentially a man of leisure, although he liked to present himself as a successful entrepreneur. He spent prodigiously, on drugs, lavish parties, cars, helicopters and yachts, and on a succession of homes, in London, Monaco, Paris and New York.

As Hervey reached adulthood, relations with his father, always distant and stiffly formal during his childhood, began to deteriorate badly. In 1974 his father married Yvonne Sutton. Johnny's belligerent reaction was to describe his second step-mother as "some kind of under-secretary". Soon afterwards, his father stripped the family wing of Ickworth bare with out informing his son, who was living there.

But perhaps the lowest point in the relationship came a few days before the young Johnny's marriage to Francesca Fisher, a 20-year-old teetotal vegetarian, in 1984. His father, then living in Monaco, took out an advertisement in *The Times* personal column to deliver an astonishing sum, announcing that he and his wife would not be attending the wedding "due to a prior engagement in London".

The following year the 6th Marquess died, and Johnny Bristol and his new wife moved into Ickworth. For a time things looked promising. He appeared to have conquered his addiction to drugs, which had led to his narrowly escaping a 15-year sentence after his arrest in New York in 1983 on charges of drug trafficking, and to have abandoned a promiscuous homosexuality which had been out in the open since around 1978. His desire to produce an heir and to settle down were clearly genuine, but it was not to be. Francesca left him for another man shortly after the move to Ickworth, and from then onwards his life spiralled downwards to disaster more or less unchecked.

In 1988 Bristol received a one-year prison sentence for attempting to smuggle cocaine into Jersey in his helicopter. The following year he was fined £3,000 for the possession of drugs. In 1990 he was deported from Australia for failing to declare his previous convictions, and in 1993 he was jailed for ten months for further drug offences. Only two days after his release he was arrested for possession of heroin. This time the court recognised that his addiction was an illness, and he was given two years' probation on condition that he received treatment for his addiction.

Meanwhile, Bristol had come into increasing conflict with the National Trust, which had taken control of Ickworth in 1986, in lieu of death duties owing on his grandfather's estate. The family had been granted free tenancy of a

wing of Ickworth in perpetuity as part of the deal, but a series of disputes with their tenant culminated in 1994 when the Trust began moves to have Bristol evicted, on the grounds that he had broken the conditions of the lease. The incidents cited included attacks on visitors to Ickworth by the Marquess's dogs and his habit of racing his beloved collection of classic cars around the estate. The Trust only relented when it became apparent that Bristol was in desperately poor health.

In February 1995 Bristol was admitted to St Mary's Hospital, Paddington. The formerly corpulent marquess was now reported to weigh less than seven stone and to be unable to walk without the aid of sticks. By this stage he was a pathetic figure, who had been reduced to selling the last of his land at Ickworth to cover his debts. Bristol was a more complex figure than the popular perception of him allowed. He was sometimes described as "charismatic" and many of his friends were in awe of him. He could be highly generous and possessed a certain arrogant and dashing charm. He was also something of a practical joker, albeit a rather sinister one. In one incident, which echoed the Earl-Bishop's celebrated race in its use of others for the Hervey amusement, he had a female American guest sail out into the lake at Ickworth in a rubber dinghy, and then sank it with his air rifle.

John Bristol had no children. His half-brother by his father's second marriage, Lord Frederick Hervey, succeeds him in the title.



The Marquess of Bristol: tragic tale of an intelligent man

SIR WILLIAM MARS-JONES

Sir William Mars-Jones, MBE, a Judge of the High Court, 1969-90, died yesterday aged 83. He was born on September 4, 1915.

Probably the stock picture that most people carried in their minds of William Mars-Jones was of a rather old-fashioned, strict and severe High Court Judge, very conscious of the dignity and importance of his office. He had tended to model himself on judges of an earlier generation—in particular on Sir Rowland Oliver who had created a great impression on him when he appeared before him as a young barrister. However, behind this facade lay a many-sided and intriguing personality, of which the stern exterior was but a part.

No stranger observing him sitting on the Bench in his court could possibly have guessed that he was gazing at a superb mimic and story-teller who could 'take off' all his judicial colleagues. Nor would anyone have surmised that this stern judge was a consummate guitarist who could entertain his friends with songs to his own accompaniment on either the ukulele, the guitar or the piano.

In his boyhood days at Denbigh County School he was known as Bill the Post—this name derived from the fact that his father, the later Alderman Henry Mars-Jones, sometime chairman of the Denbighshire County Council and considerable local politician, ran the post office in the little village of Llanasaun in the Mynyddoedd hills, as well as numerous other enterprises all based on that centre.

At school, William Lloyd Mars-Jones was greatly influenced by two of his teachers at Denbigh School. The first was the headmaster, W. A. Evans, a strict disciplinarian and believer in the work ethic. The other, who had an even greater influence upon him, was Stan Rees, who was subsequently to become a famous headmaster himself at Llanelli Grammar School. At Denbigh, Rees was an English master and he regularly imparted to his pupils a great love of English literature together with his own command of the Welsh art of the raconteur of which he was an even greater exponent than Mars-Jones himself, to say



Mars-Jones: a Judge of the old school, conscious of the dignity of his office

Jones's greatest qualities was his loyalty to friends and institutions, and there was no doubt his unwavering loyalty to his old circuit. He joined it at a time when it was the custom to "follow the circuit" from Asize town to Asize town through each of the counties of Wales and Cheshire.

There was a close camaraderie between the members and the vintage of the two decades following the war was very good. Many of the members distinguished themselves as advocates, judges or as politicians—and circuit life was happy, if tumultuous. Mars-Jones served his circuit in

many ways: he was its junior in his early days, subsequently he became its leader and eventually its presiding judge. Shortly before his retirement he was unanimously elected an honorary life member.

He was a formidable and tenacious advocate and a sound lawyer. He had a tremendous capacity for work and mastered every case in which he was involved thoroughly. Extremely methodical in his approach, he tended to probe every point in a case rather than go for the jugular. His opponents learnt to respect his application and courage and his determination in the interests of his client. His

reputation among solicitors

was that he was a great fighter for his side. What he lacked in discrimination he made up for in sheer tenacity. His weapon was the broadsword rather than the rapier. His opponents learnt that they could never take anything for granted if they had Bill Mars-Jones against them. He was a successful and admired advocate taking silk in 1957 and leading for the prosecution of the defence in a number of well-known criminal trials—he prosecuted in the notorious Moors Murder trial of 1965—as well as in a variety of civil cases.

It came as no surprise when

THE RIGHT REV FRANK WEST

The Right Rev Francis (Frank) West, Suffragan Bishop of Taunton, 1962-77, died on January 2 aged 89. He was born on January 9, 1909.

TALL, handsome and gifted with extraordinary charm, Frank West exercised an effective ministry in Anglican Orders at various levels. Early in life he found a call to ordination, partly through discovering, while taking part in a university mission, his gift for friendship among the workers in an industrial area of Halifax; and, although his work eventually took him to rather more rural spheres, he never lost his ability to get close to "ordinary" people.

A central churchman with a feel for history and a well-furnished mind, he knew better than most what was meant by a Church that was both Catholic and Reformed, while understanding equally the value of continuity and the necessity for innovation. He could lead worship and preach incisive sermons in such a way as to address the modern world with the wisdom and dignity of tradition.

It was the same with his writing. He produced six or seven books, small but distinguished, on aspects of the Church's history, some involving original research in archives. He also published an able portrait of the famous F. R. Barry, the Bishop of Southwell who made West an archdeacon in his diocese.

When he retired to Aldbourne, after 15 years as a bishop, a period during which he established an especially effective ministry in schools, where he showed a real talent for engaging the young in constructive dialogue. There had been times, both as an archdeacon and as a bishop, when the load of work or the rivalry of the ambitious nearly broke him; but Beryl, his able and devoted wife, whom he had married in 1947 while still at Upton, was a constant source of support—becoming his life-line when age and infirmity overtook him. She survives him, together with a son and a daughter.

South East Asia (where he was mentioned in dispatches). He was then heavily involved in arranging, and lecturing in, post-war courses — held abroad and in England — for prospective ordinands from the Forces.

In 1946 he returned to civilian clerical life and went to the Southwell diocese to become vicar of Upton. While still at Upton, West was made Archdeacon of Newark, and from 1947 exercised this strenuous ministry for 15 years, combining it with responsibility first for Upton and then, from 1951, for East Retford, where he also served as rural dean. In 1962, at the invitation of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, he changed dioceses again to become Suffragan Bishop of Taunton, combining his episcopal duties there for the first nine years with ministering to Dinder, a tiny country parish south-east of Wells, and throughout the whole 15-year period occupying a prebendal stall in the cathedral.

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Latest wills

E1,615,220 net. She left £500 to the RSPCA; £200 to the RNIB and to the Parish Church of St George, Chorley.

Thomas George Blumsoona, of Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire, left estate valued at £1,261,791 net.

Elizabeth Rogers Bull, of Dallington, Northampton, left estate valued at £1,090,827 net. She left £10,000 to the RNIB and to the National Trust.

Brigidather Thomas Neil Mc Micking, of London W8, left estate valued at £739,650 net.

Gillian Pemberton, of London SW9, left estate valued at £1,036,686 net.

Nathan Storz, of Hendon, London NW4, left estate valued at £1,073,177 net.

Eileen May Ayilffe Tate, of Bishop's Hull, Taunton, Somerset, left estate valued at £1,037,688 net.

Nicola Georgina Taylor, of Llangynidr, Crikhowell, Powys, left estate valued at £1,240,040 net.

Sylvia Mary Groves, of Erdington, Birmingham, left estate valued at £1,216,151 net. She left £500 to both Belstead Church and Blackhall Church.

Anne Banks, of Chorley, Lancashire, left estate valued at £1,228,138 net.

Florence Mary Hetherrell, of Royal UK Beneficent Association,

Abbeyfield Society, Distressed Gentlefolk's Aid Association, Leonard Cheshire Foundation, Council for the Protection of Rural England and the National Trust.

Stephen Carey Steedman, farmer, of Woolston, North Cadbury, Yeovil, Somerset, left estate valued at £1,128,366 net.

Fanny Elizabeth Stevenson, of Yeadon, Leeds, left estate valued at £1,038,686 net.

Nathan Storz, of Hendon, London NW4, left estate valued at £1,073,177 net.

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PASSING OF AN 'ENORMOUS NAME'

We now see, though few saw then, that the ship which brought home the body of Napoleon to be laid under the gorgeous dome of the Invalids did in effect bring home his nephew. Meanwhile, this strange, meditative, inscrutable man, dark to others, often, doubtless, to himself, was learning everywhere, everything. In long captivity, in Switzerland and in our Metropolis, he had nothing to do but that which Princes often cannot do—to read, observe, think and learn, and watch the star of his destiny. Within the sphere of thought and feeling the man who can think, and feel, and intend, and design is an autocrat. He wants no advisers; he depends on no informants; he is bound to no agents; he is all in all—the first and last in his mental realm. That was the late Emperor's education, as careful when it depended on himself and Fortune as when an Emperor, a nation, and a Royal mother gave their heart and soul to it. It prepared him for Empire,

ON THIS DAY

January 11, 1873

At the heart of a long article on Louis Napoleon III was embedded one explanation of the Emperor's nephew's failure to match the achievements of his uncle.

but not, as we now see, for Constitutional Government; and not, as we now see, for the qualities necessary to success under the overwhelming difficulties of unexpected and unexampled prosperity. It prepared him for plebeians and coups d'état, a portfolio teaming with schemes, new maps of Europe, rectified frontiers, wars for empire repaid with territory, intrigues, demonstrations, vast material undertakings, and, in all things, a regard to that which pleases the fancy

and meets the eye. It prepared him for the pageant and the scene, but not for the stern realities of all life, whether public or private—not for the successes only attainable by the full tension and continual exercise of the highest moral and mental faculties. A student may learn, a dreamer may have visions, a thinker may arrive at conclusions or collect and arrange ideas; but if they have to spend the best part of their lives out of the action of life, watching, observing, and patiently expecting, they will be sure to find that when the opportunity does arise they cannot deal with men, except as the bloodless creatures of their own ideal world. For 20 years the world saw, with continual misgiving, the outburst of a long pent-up power, the very Summer of Empire full of leaf and flower, the very Autumn ripening everywhere to decay. France was to be dazzled with a succession of grand displays, from the fantastic shows of a Palace enormous fêtes unequalled Exhibitions, and the chase itself transformed into a forest masquerade, to wars and threats of war, in which glory was the only prize...

NEWS

Blair supports Cook

Tony Blair appealed to voters to rise above the personal shortcomings of his ministers after Robin Cook's former wife published an intimate and embarrassing account of their failed marriage. The Prime Minister said that British politics was in danger of being relegated to little more than a gossip column, "an extension of Hollywood", if ministers' private lives remained relentlessly under the microscope. **Pages 1, 4, 5**

Government could pay nurses more

The Government could comfortably afford an above-average pay increase for Britain's nurses, in spite of the threat of economic recession this year, according to City forecasts. The predictions suggest that the Government is heading for a budget surplus of up to £10 billion this year because tax receipts have been far higher than expected. **Page 1**

Marquess dead

The Marquess of Bristol, who scandalised society with his debauchery and drug abuse, has died suddenly at his Suffolk home, aged 44. **Page 1**

Europe crisis

Jacques Santer goes before the European Parliament with his 19 commissioners tonight in an attempt to defuse a censure vote that is certain to inflict heavy political damage. **Page 1**

Speaker may go

Betty Boothroyd is considering springing a surprise on the Commons by standing down as Speaker before the next election. **Page 1**

Government relaunch

Senior Cabinet ministers will this week unveil a string of policy initiatives as part of a mini-government relaunch designed to wrest the agenda off personalities and onto issues. **Page 2**

Still smiling

The Irish will be taught to be friendlier in a £250,000 government campaign intended to improve the country's reputation for hospitality. **Page 3**

Kidnap ordeal

Tense negotiations continued for the release of John Brooke, the kidnapped oil worker, after Yemeni ministers promised Britain they will not use force. **Page 3**

Tintin, the man of the century

Tintin celebrated his seventieth birthday amid agreement in the French-speaking world on his heroic status and fierce debate over his sexuality and politics. The media devoted much time to a portrayal of the Belgian cartoon character as a figure who towered above the 20th century with just one rival, General Charles de Gaulle. **Page 10**



A 1929 4-cylinder Ford joined 150 other vintage cars and motor-cycles in a classic car rally through the streets of Calcutta.

Chinese choice

Milton Keynes, best known until now for its concrete cows and American-style shopping malls, has become the most popular destination in Britain for people who left Hong Kong. **Page 6**

Mother's shock

Maureen Kearney, a 65-year-old grandmother, was in a West Belfast shopping centre when she spotted the man she blames for the killing of her son. **Page 7**

Out of balance

A group set up at the Government's request to help employees and employers to achieve a better balance between work and family life is threatening to become a major embarrassment. **Page 8**

Atrocity alert

The Indian Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpeyi, visited western India in an attempt to curb a wave of atrocities against Christians. **Page 9**

Clinton DNA test

DNA tests on the 13-year-old Arkansas boy rumoured to be President Clinton's illegitimate son have proved negative. **Page 10**

Saddam defiant

President Saddam Hussein gained popular support when Iraq's rubber-stamp parliament urged his Government to reject "unjust" UN resolutions. **Page 11**

Merger: The catastrophic fall in the crude oil price has forced two former enemies, Enterprise Oil and Lasko, into discussions that could lead to a £2.3 billion merger of their companies. **Page 48**

Millennium: Fears are growing that efforts by large companies to protect their businesses from the millennium bug could lead to a rapid boom followed by a bust at the turn of the century. Evidence is emerging of stockpiling in both raw materials and products as firms attempt to ringfence operations. **Page 45**

Age trap: Ageism should make us angry. Tom Kirkwood, professor of biological gerontology, says: "Someone said that we are born copies and develop into originals. Older people's life experience make them unique." **Pages 14, 15**

Lisa Armstrong: In the immediate excitement that greeted Tom Ford's hippy spring collection for Gucci last October, the models' hair seemed a minor footnote. But hair and make-up are never details in a business where a clever cut at the right moment can make a model's career and launch a million imitations. Suddenly it's OK to be a Sevenies girl. **Pages 16, 17**

In the galleries: The Tate's large retrospective of Jackson Pollock looks unmissable, while the Monet exhibition at the Royal Academy is set to be the new year's most popular art show. **Page 19**

Hot tickets: From Hollywood to the West End, from the Tate Gallery to the Barbican, *Times* critics choose their highlights. **Pages 18, 19**

On film: Warren Beatty stars as a steely US Senator in *Bulwark*, while Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman team up to cast a spell in *Practical Magic* and Joseph Fiennes impersonates the Bard in *Shakespeare in Love*. **Page 18**

At the theatre: Cate Blanchett, Richard Dreyfuss, Rufus Sewell and Klaus Maria Brandauer star on the London stage. **Page 18**

In the studios: The Tate's large retrospective of Jackson Pollock looks unmissable, while the Monet exhibition at the Royal Academy is set to be the new year's most popular art show. **Page 19**

Leaders: Gianluca Viali, the Chelsea player-coach, poured scorn on the continuing efforts of Rund Giulietti to undermine the achievement of taking his team to the top. **Page 25**

Football: Manchester United closed the gap on the Premiership leaders when they comfortably defeated West Ham United 4-1 at Old Trafford. **Page 29**

Cricket: Man of the match Alan Mullally spurred England to a tense eight-run win against Australia in the first of the triangular one-day series at Brisbane. **Page 27**

Rugby Union: In the shock of the Tetley Bitter Cup fourth round, Henley travelled to Bedford and thoroughly deserved their famous 29-22 victory. **Page 34**

Simon Beames: The wives are in agony, not just because they married a darts players - a tough enough break in all conscience - but also because their man is now up there dinging in the 180s. **Page 33**

Tennis: Tim Henman, expected to win the final of the Qatar Open in Doha against Germany's Rainer Schüttler, lost 6-4, 5-7, 6-1 to a player more than a hundred places below him. **Page 26**

1, 15, 23, 34, 37, 40, Bonus: 45. Two tickets shared £8.9m; 16,999 £17,189 for five numbers; 15,998 bonus £80 won £2,113 for five numbers; 42,188 won £89 for four; and 801,662 won £10 for three.

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

ARTS

A new label: Brian Griffiths and other artists are leading the way in what's being termed Neuronic Realism

LAW

How long before the American-style compensation culture conquers Britain?

Preview: A new series of *Dad* (BBC1, 8.30pm) **Review:** *Shooting the Past* was a curate's egg, says Paul Hoggart. **Pages 46, 47**

The Cook book

The Cabinet would not be the stronger for Mr Cook's departure. One hope around which the Labour leadership should rally is that this thorny but talented minister can bring an end to the time when he has been an understandably distracted man. **Page 21**

Nursing for nurses

Nursing reform is not only a necessary part of the Government's modernisation project, but also a pressing political need if cries of "crisis" are not to continue to emanate from hospital wards. **Page 21**

Ever young

Older people are being brought back to the workplace. Their experience enriches us. **Page 21**

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

The similarity of the psychological dramas of Cook and Clinton is most striking. Cast both stories as novels, and ask what is the core of the plot. **Page 20**

PETER RIDDELL

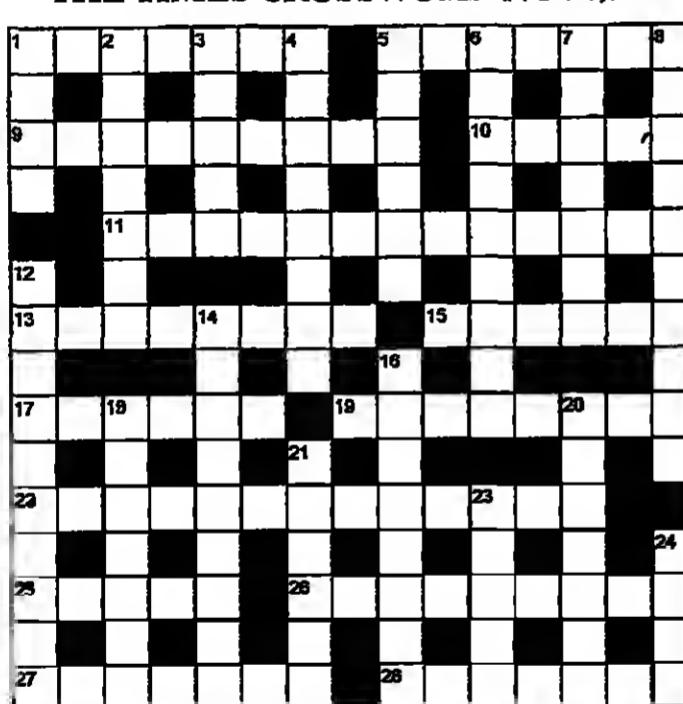
The striking feature of the latest polls is how little impact the Mandelson affair has had on public opinion, not how much. The ratings of Mr Blair and Labour are still much higher than at the last election. **Page 20**

7th Marquess of Bristol; Sir William Marks-Jones, judge; the Right Rev Francis West **Page 23**

Christ as Che Guevara advert; call for honesty on euro; Roman dates; Cromwell's escutcheon; pig farmers' plight **Page 21**

For Washington to make use of a body that has been created by the Security Council of the UN for a specific purpose is not only to thumb one's nose at the world body but to abandon all moral scruples while arguing, cynically, from the moral high ground. **Hong Kong Standard**

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,997



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Sun rises: 6.02 am 4.24 pm

Moon sets: 12.27 am 1.49 am

New moon: January 17th

London 1.4 pm to 3.37 pm

Belfast 1.21 pm to 3.22 pm

Edinburgh 4.03 pm to 8.37 pm

Manchester 4.13 pm to 8.20 pm

Glasgow 4.02 pm to 8.15 pm

Hanover 1.31 pm to 3.31 pm

Hamburg 1.31 pm to 3.31 pm

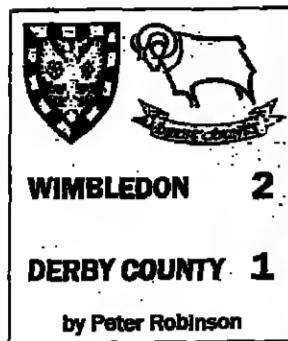
Paris 1.31 pm to 3.31 pm

Barcelona 1.31 pm to 3.31 pm

Madrid 1.31 pm to 3.31 pm

Paris 1.31 pm

Winning spirit is food for County's thoughts



IT WAS perhaps the most bizarre thing seen on a television screen in recent times, the sight of a Spanish woman undergoing surgery without the need of anaesthetic. It was gruesome, yes, probably pointless, too, since most sane people would much prefer to sleep through the whole ordeal, but most of all it was impressive. Anything, it seems, is possible if you want it, or want to do it, badly enough.

Asetic Indian men can lie on beds of nails or walk over burning coals without incurring physical injury. Smokers can give up the evil weed. Men and women, young and old, fat and thin, able-bodied or not, can complete marathons, triathlons and worse. Vinne Jones can, and indeed does, dream of and enjoy a career at the highest level of football, even winning international caps. Anything, absolutely anything, is possible.

That last example is opposite, of course. Jones embodied the spirit of Wimbledon Football Club better than anyone — the rough edges, the rebelliousness, the refusal to be intimidated by anybody or any situation — and, although he has long since left, to pursue an even more improbable career in the film, the spirit remains.

Willpower won this match on Saturday, not skill, not luck, not tactics, not fitness. Derby County were superior in almost every way, every position they dominated from start to finish — but they never looked like winning.

Every time the ball ran loose, a Wimbledon player sprinted at it, oblivious to the whereabouts of friend or foe alike; every time a Derby striker bore down on goal — which happened rather a lot — a blue shirt materialised in front of him, blocked his path and then seemed to vanish again. There was no masterplan, no strategic design, just clearance after tackle after header after save. No wonder Derby looked a bit bemused as they walked off at the end.

They were a goal down after just seven minutes, punished for some rotten defending. Roberts tried to find Euell in-

Venables bemused...
Results and tables
Lynne Truss

side the penalty area, but souffled his chip; never mind, a weak clearance gave him the chance to try again, so he rolled his pass in the same direction, where Euell was still waiting, and he tucked his shot into the corner. Defenders stood and watched, which was nice of them, if negligent.

Roused, Derby poured forward in search of an equaliser, only to be denied by every type of last-gasp intervention that you can imagine. They had to wait for the 75th minute for their equaliser, which came when Wanchope finally escaped his marker for a moment to head in a deep free kick by Dorigo.

Visibly irritated, Wimbledon quickly scored again, Roberts driving home from ten yards after being set up by Ekoku and Dearden, and the pattern resumed. Perry could have been sent off for bringing down Burton as the substitute threatened to break away, but the Derby protests were pretty half-hearted and he was merely booked, a fair decision (the collision looked unintentional), if not quite the right one.

Still, everything went Wimbledon's way on Saturday, even if they were forced to field a weakened team owing to injuries and what have you. It promises to be even worse away to Tottenham Hotspur next week, with Ekoku and Gayle on international duty, Cort and Euell suspended, to name but four certain non-starters, but that kind of adversity appears only to make them try even harder. They thrive on it. It is simply a matter of willpower.

WIMBLEDON (4-2) N Sultan — B Thomas, J Venables, N Venables, A Ambrose, C Hughes (sub E Pricke), M Hunt, A Roberts, J Euell, M Hughes (sub M Kennedy), 97 — M Gayle, C Cort (sub C Leatum), 72

DERBY COUNTY (3-5-2) M Poern — S Hix, V Carlson, S Elliot (sub K Harper), 89 — J Larsen, L Carley, S Erano (sub L Brown), 68, D Powell (sub D Burton 88), A Dongo — P Wanchope, O Stumingo

Referee: A White

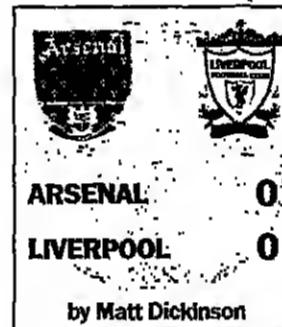
Referee: A White

FA Carling Premiership: Eagerly anticipated Highbury soufflé fails to rise



Fowler, Liverpool's England forward, has an unusual view of the world after taking a heavy tumble at Highbury, where his indifferent form must have disturbed the watching Glenn Hoddle

Liverpool display new defensive resilience



of Serie A assuredness and the fact that Liverpool had to defend in such numbers would suggest that the men charged with the task still need reinforcements.

That there has been drastic improvement under Houllier is not open to debate, though. Reinventing himself as a Gallic George Graham since the ending of his doomed partnership with Roy Evans, the Frenchman has proved to be a firm wielder of the whip at the training ground, from which mobile phones have been banned and communication, certainly among the defenders, appears to have benefited. There is a resilience and a tactical organisation that was so hopelessly absent under the previous regime.

"We are cutting off the Spice Boys

reputation," Houllier said, bursting with pride. "This performance would not have been possible two months ago, even one month, but they have proved that we have mental toughness and a more professional approach to defending. Why? Because it is their lives. We had strength and solidity when we lost the ball and that is what we have been trying to get for two months. No team can do well when they are shaky and have schoolboy mistakes."

Houllier will know that not los-

ing, especially against a blunt Arse-

nal team, badly lacking the invention of Dennis Bergkamp, is only the start. They have to balance that, particularly at home, with dominating marches and, to do that, he needs to address the problem that is Robbie Fowler.

The England striker's goalscoring record merits better treatment than playing the start horse to Michael Owen's racing thoroughbred, but, with the boy wonder so much the focus for Liverpool's attacks, Fowler seems to be

condemned to act as the labouring sidekick. It is clearly affecting his form and Fowler's lack of confidence must have been noticed by the watching Glenn Hoddle. Then again, if the England coach's main reason for attending was to gauge how his England team might perform against France next month, he may be having second thoughts about playing the match at all.

When two of England's leading midfield players can be made to look so pedestrian, there are reasons for everybody to be alarmed, but that was exactly what happened to Ince and Redknapp. Emmanuel Petit, in particular, was masterful and he will be relishing the chance to strut around Wembley with Ince in his wake. Patrick Vieira took slight

longer to warm up, but then he cannot even make the France line-up at present.

Even with Berger thrown in, Liverpool's midfield three provided no contest for the Arsenal pair, whose efficiency, both with and without the ball, is peerless. As long as they remain fit and disciplined, their team will remain championship contenders. They even managed to shrug off the provocation of Ince's elbow catching Petit in the face after 45 minutes.

Arsenal's problem — to one's surprise — was penetration, with Anelka and Overmars both short of full form and fitness. "We need that first goal to change the match," Wenger said. "Liverpool came to defend, but we have to show the strength to overcome that."

Indeed, all that Gaile influence produced a sputtering of a match — and it was very much to Houllier's taste.

ARSENAL (4-4-2) A Manzini — L Zhou, M Keown, S Bould (sub M Upson, 33min), D Groves (sub R Parreira), P Vieira, E Pele, M Overmars (sub R Ince 84), N Anelka (sub C Holt, 87), L Mota.

LIVERPOOL (3-5-2) O James — J Carragher, S Johnson (sub M Musto), G2, P Keane, V Henderson, R Redknapp, P Barnes, S Henkens — R Fowler, M Owen (sub K Rock), 89

Referee: G Barber

Ewood Park raises a glass to the Rovers' return



EWOOD PARK regulars insisted that there had not been such a sustained din since Shearer and Sutton shot Blackburn Rovers to the title, and the echoes could yet be heard far beyond the confines of Blackburn. Adversity can destroy teams more easily than it can inspire them and, by their response on Saturday, it was clear that supporters had reaffirmed their passion for a side that had rediscovered its soul.

For the 22 minutes that they

competed on level terms, Blackburn Rovers and Leeds United had served up some standard FA Carling Premiership fare: excessive caution, uninitiated energy and occasional malice, subjugating skill and numbing invention. Then Blackburn scored and, almost immediately, had a man sent off. It is arguable

which was worse for Leeds. Before half-time, the siege of John Filan's goal had been laid and, after that, it was like a re-enactment of Roker's Drift. Blackburn's four penalty-area sentries stood tall and immovable while, in front of them, a line of five foot-soldiers threw themselves at the advancing Leeds hordes. And all the while, animated to the point of self-combustion, Brian Kidd, the Blackburn manager, was patrolling the touchline and bellowing his orders: "Reload, aim, tackle!"

It is hard to argue that, even

on this occasion, the good guys won. Blackburn created their own problems when Tim Sherwood, the captain, was dismissed for the second time this season, a yellow card for an off-the-ball skirmish with Lee Bowyer during

followed by another for a foul on

the same player. He could have no argument with the first booking and, while the second might have been harsh, Sherwood should not have given the referee the opportunity that he grasped with obvious relish. Their subsequent rear-guard action, though, was little short of heroic. Encouraged by a crowd that recognises the effort needed to contain a team as good as Leeds, Blackburn eventually gave up any pretence of attack and, for all that Leeds pounds them to the brink of submission, they never pushed them over the edge. Filan, the hall seldom less than 30 yards from his goal, had just one moment of real alarm and when Hasselbaink's awkward header bounced towards the bottom corner of his net six minutes from time, he plunged athletically to his left to claw the danger away.

Rovers' wretched disciplinary record is something that Kidd cannot shirk from addressing. They had 11 players dismissed in 14 months under his predecessor, Roy Hodgson — significantly failing to win on each occasion — and their squad does not possess the strength in depth that al-

lows them to make light of suspensions. But this was a moment to accentuate the positives, and there were plenty of them. Kidd chose not to single out individuals, although the contributions of Ward — on his debut — and Wilcox, in unfamiliar defensive roles, and the composure of Broome, just 21, at the heart of defence were highly impressive. Nor would he dwell on a sequence that now reads played seven, won four, drawn three, thanks to Keith Gillespie's ugly, toe-poke past Martyn — at fault with a sloppy initial clearance — and two Leeds defenders.

"I can't be bothered with records and runs," Kidd insisted. "I can only do my best and hope that it's good enough." He did elaborate on the "one for all" ethic, however, brought with him from Old Trafford. "If you want to win things in the Premiership, it has to be as a team, not as individuals," he said. "I have just come from a club where it was the same, where there were supposedly super stars. But there were no egos there. It is the same here."

"The desire, hunger and ambition has got to come from within. What I can do is remind the players that they're in a cracking job and that they should be grateful. The crowd, too, has been nothing but supportive, but I've got to earn their respect." He could hardly have made a better start.

BLACKBURN ROVERS (4-4-2) — F. Benítez, K. Kilani, S. Hart, M. Ward, M. Wilcox, C. Davidson — K. Gillespie, T. Sherwood, W. Molony, J. Wilson — A. Ward, O. Duff (sub D. Dunn 20), R. Hasselbaink.

LEEDS UNITED (4-4-2) N Martin — G. Smith, G. O'Grady, D. Bowles, J. McAllister, L. Bowden, P. Hoban, B. Rebeiro (sub S. McPhee 79), J. Hasselbaink, H. Kewell. Referee: R. Harte

Expectations add pressure to O'Neill's colourless task



THERE was a theme running through the feelings expressed by many Everton fans before their team's meeting with Leicester City on Saturday. Martin O'Neill, the visiting manager, had come perilously close to accepting the manager's job at Goodison Park last summer: that he did not they said, was because he could not handle the pressure of working for such a big club.

O'Neill's take on the situation became clear a couple of hours later. Although he never said as much, managing an aspiring-yet-unfashionable club was just as stressful: a no-win situation, in fact.

He could not tear himself

away from the press lounge before he had hammered home his credibility. "I received this letter from a supporter a couple of weeks ago," he said. "He has been a fan for 32 years and he was telling me that, since winning the Coca-Cola Cup in 1997, we had done nothing. What has he been watching for 30 years? It might seem nice and comfortable at Leicester, but people expect too much from us now."

Leicester will never be considered a big club. O'Neill knows that more than anyone, for it must occupy his thoughts

and dreams every time he is connected with another vacancy. Instead, O'Neill's task at Leicester is to keep their status in the FA Carling Premiership something that is becoming increasingly difficult.

The amount of money in

the Premiership means that the better players are tending to gravitate to the biggest clubs more and more," O'Neill said. "That gives us a problem because we've got some fantastic players, players that other clubs are always looking at.

"We've got to keep them if

we're going to have any more

success, but we've got to have

some success soon if we're go-

ing to keep them. Heskey,

Izen, Lennon, Elliott — they

all need a reason to stay with us."

Everton (3-5-2) T. Myre — R. Dunn, G. Watson, D. Unsworth — A. Dugard, J. O'Dowd, M. Ball — J. Baker, G. O'Connor (sub N. Burrows, Temp)

LEICESTER CITY (4-4-2) K. Kelly — P. Smith, N. Izen, J. Lennon, R. Elliott — A. Dugard, M. Izen, N. Lennon, S. Doherty — A. Doherty, E. Heskey

Referee: P. Duthie

IT IS painful. Watching Charlton Athletic is like having to visit the dentist every week to be told that everything possible is being done, the dentist is well-qualified, but, for some curious reason, he cannot remove the tooth. "Just yank it out," you scream, but the dentist gently tugs and wiggles it and nothing happens.

Alan Curbishley's side dis-

plays the full range of tugs and wiggles. As a consequence, their football is attractive and studies them the aura of the perfect underdog.

They lose all the time — the defeat on Saturday was their ninth in a row in all competitions

— but contribute sufficient glee to make the neutral sympathetic.

Curbishley is amazed that their poor streak has not ren-

dered them the obvious run of

the FA Carling Premiership li-

ter, but, for as long as Notting-

ham Forest drag themselves

through the motions and Ever-

ton and Sheffield Wednesday

at least tease the bottom three

that a collapse is imminent, all

is not lost.

What Charlton need is ei-

ther a new, top-class striker

or the ability to replicate the

five minutes of abrasiveness

that preceded their equaliser

against Southampton throughout our entire games. Neither is a

simple task. As for the abra-

siveness, it is something that

cannot be taught, it is instinct.

Southampton took the lead

in a near-comical fashion, with Hassan Kachloul dancing

through the gaps in the interwoven limbs of the prostrate

Charlton defence to deliver a decent ball

into the area. Southampton flapped, cleared but never well

enough and the ball fell kindly

for Redfearn, whose shot

bounced off the line. Still

Charlton snarled and, finally,

Kinsella's cross was headed in

by Andy Hunt. But that was it

and the bite then left Charlton.

Mills continued to outpace Collet, but he never capitalised on it and, seven minutes into the second half, Collet

<p

FA Carling Premiership: West Ham suffer one of their darker days in four-goal mauling

United display power surge



THE power was cut ten minutes before the game was due to kick off at Old Trafford yesterday afternoon. When it was restored 45 minutes later, the floodlights shone as brightly as ever but Manchester United performed only in flickers. It says much for the poverty of the play of West Ham United that they still looked like rabbits paralysed by the glare.

The level of United's dominance was almost embarrassing, particularly as they were far from their fluent best. West Ham, who could have gone sixth in the FA Carling Premiership if they had won, offered so little going forward that the eminence of their position almost beggars belief. United just picked them off with four of their handful of chances.

Alex Ferguson, the United manager, had to give his dressing-room team-talk in darkness and he said later: "I think the players enjoyed it because it meant they could go to sleep."

The 4-1 victory, courtesy of two routine strikes from Andy Cole, a neat finish from Dwight Yorke and a late header from Ole Gunnar Solskjær, took United above Arsenal into fourth place in the table, two points behind Chelsea and Aston Villa. It will take a better team than West Ham, though, to test their mettle as the championship race heats up.

It was easy to forget yesterday that Ferguson had sent Peter Schmeichel and Paul Scholes, two of his leading players, on holiday, not caring that they would be absent against Harry Redknapp's team. Schmeichel went to Barbados, Scholes to the Lake District and David Beckham was kept on the bench. Not that it really mattered: their team-mates still managed to look as though they were enjoying a winter break of their own. If there was a bright spot for



High-powered: Yorke takes a celebratory leap after his cool finish had given United an early lead at Old Trafford. Photograph by Marc Aspland

West Ham, it came in the Premiership debut of Joe Cole, their 17-year-old midfield player, who has long been tipped to be one of the great players of the future. Cole played for the entire second half and had a hand in Frank Lampard's consolation goal two minutes from the end. By then, however, his team had been humiliated by United's slicker passing and they were overwhelmed by the presence of Jaap Stam, who seems to improve with every game, and Henning Berg. From that point, it was merely a case of the size of United's margin of victory.

Cole should have increased United's lead in the fourteenth minute, when Blomqvist's cross reached him inside the six-yard box, but he took an age to control the ball and, by the time that he mustered a

shot, Hislop had managed to get close enough to smother it. In fact, it was a surprise that it took United until five minutes before half-time to double their lead. Blomqvist was again the instigator, passing square to Butt. His shot bounced over Hislop's dive and, when it cannoned off the post, it fell kindly to Cole, who lashed it into an empty net.

Berkovic missed West Ham's first chance, five minutes after the interval, when he headed a cross from Lazaridis wide, and the visitors should have gone further behind a few minutes later when Cole hooked the ball over from close range after Irwin's shot had been parried by Hislop. Irwin himself went close

midway through the half, heading another rebound from Hislop's gloves just wide.

The third goal, though, was worth the wait. Irwin won a challenge with Pearce midway inside the West Ham half and fed Yorke. He twisted and turned past two challenges before playing a beautifully weighted reverse pass into the path of Cole, who, once more, had time aplenty to steady himself before rolling his shot past Hislop and into the corner.

United's supporters began

to amuse themselves by comparing West Ham to Manchester City in song and airing their grievances about Glenn Hoddle's treatment of United players at England get-togethers. Their attention was prised

away for one last time ten minutes from the end. Giggs's attempt to lob Hislop was saved, but Solskjær headed the ball back towards goal. Rio Ferdinand made a desperate attempt to hook the ball clear but could only hack the ball on to the underside of the bar and into the net.

Lampard's late goal rescued a little dignity, but it was academic. If the flickering burns into full power, United will be hard to stop.

MANCHESTER UNITED (4-2-3-1): R van der

H Beep, J Stam, D Irwin — R Giggs, R Keown, J Cayfi, B9, N Butt (sub: O Sackey, per: 77), J Blomqvist — D Yorke, A Cole, W.F. Pearce, F. Lampard, S. Lizarazu, S. Lomax, D Gordon, T. Shicks (sub: J Cole, 49). Referee: M Read.

Vialli gives Gullit cause for the blues

ONE was given a sheep's heart, another a zimmer frame, another a copy of *Mein Kampf*. They were meant as jokey Christmas presents from one Newcastle United player to another, but, as they left the pitch at St James' Park to the jeers of their disillusioned supporters, the gifts had become savage symbols of a tottering team struggling to play with passion.

Some of the taunts, the yells that the players should have their wages docked after a lacklustre second-half performance, were typical excesses of a football crowd frustrated by another apparent demonstration of the fact that they are slipping further and further away from capturing the honours that were once within touching distance.

Newcastle are thirteenth in the FA Carling Premiership now. They have lost each of their past three league games and their supporters are still racked by doubts about the commitment to the club of their manager, Ruud Gullit, after his failure to buy a home in the area and his preference for commuting from Amsterdam.

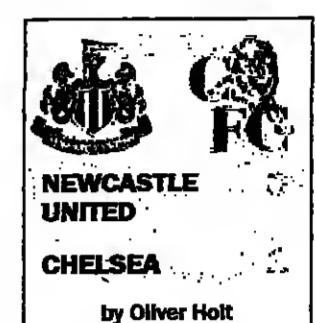
Part of the problem on Saturday, of course, was that Newcastle were facing a Chelsea side that is increasingly revealing the depths of its talents. In the past, Chelsea would have buckled under the assault the Geordies subjected them to in the first half an hour. They are not the southern softies of legend any more, though. This Chelsea stood firm, even on a bitter January day so cold that it might have frozen the wings of the Angel of the North.

Once the new league leaders had gone ahead six minutes before half-time, they killed the game off ruthlessly. They did not waste possession, they kept it. They played the ball into the corners, they probed until Newcastle were exhausted and unable to exert any more pressure. And, when they had broken their hosts, they moved in to finish them off.

If Dennis Wise had not stubbed his toe on the turf when Dan Petrescu put him through in the 73rd minute, if Roberto di Matteo had not shot straight at Shay Given 15 minutes earlier, after another pass from Petrescu the result would have reflected Chelsea's superior incisiveness and emphasised Newcastle's lack of guile.

There were a few encouraging signs for Gullit. Didier Domi, his new signing, looked impressively confident and composed on his debut as left wing back and Dietmar Hamann twice brought outstanding saves out of Ed de Goey with stinging free kicks that the Dutch goalkeeper did well to parry. Even when De Goey was beaten in the fifth minute, Leboeuf blocked Anderson's close-range shot on the line with his stomach.

Yet any hints of optimism were wiped out by assertions from Hamann yesterday that the dressing-room was hopelessly split, that the foreign



by Oliver Holt

players questioned the commitment of their English colleagues and that he was aggrieved by Gullit's long absences from the training pitch. Once more, the aloof style that Gullit adopted at Stamford Bridge is causing friction.

At Chelsea, in contrast, the problems that had threatened to engulf Gullit in his final days — problems of team morale and tactics that had seen his side win only two of their last eight games under his control — appeared to have receded quickly under Vialli.

To Newcastle, they were the very epitome of concentration and determination, more resolute than any Chelsea side has been for a long time. They may be missing Gustavo Poyet and Tore Andre Flo, but Vialli ran himself into the ground for the cause on Saturday and his team appears to have learnt the habit of absorbing injuries.

Their winner came in the 39th minute after a poor ball from Hughes had led to a Chelsea throw-in deep in Newcastle territory. It was worked quickly to Wise and his cross found Petrescu unmarked eight yards out. It was the s



Petrescu simple winner

pleist of tasks to rifle it under the dive of Given.

"I hope I can cope with the pressure of having to play and manage," Vialli said. "I have to be on the ball. I have to be a better manager and player now than I have ever been before because now it is vital that I get it absolutely right. I think the players know that this is a difficult situation for me and they have to be even more responsible than before."

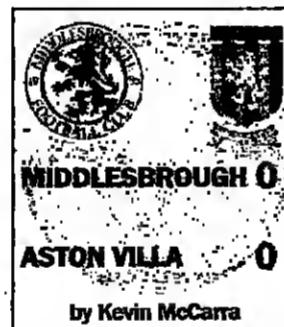
So far, they are living up to Vialli's expectations. Zimmer frames and sheep's hearts will not be figuring on their Christmas list this year.

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Gascoigne desperately seeking fulfilment



by Kevin McCarron

PAUL GASCOIGNE'S delight in football does not encompass a sense of the ridiculous. For the benefit of the television cameras on Saturday, he gave a grotty account of foreign players who have brought their unreliable ways to these shores and demeaned the illustrious traditions of English football. Gascoigne ought to have corpsed, abandoning himself to laughter over the preposterously *Señor* lines that he was reciting.

Between this grave demeanour and his riotous past, there is a strain so severe that it could snap open the San Andreas Fault like a handbag and let San Francisco tumble in. Gascoigne, in mid-interview, might have wished for the ground to swallow him up, too, had he recalled previous indiscretions. All the same, it would be sad to see the Middlesbrough mid-field player vanish.

His dubious moralising about diffident overseas signings is really an expression of disappointment that so

few others share his own delirious love of the game. After a couple of poor performances, which ended in substitution, one saw 90 minutes of the besotted Gascoigne against Aston Villa. It did not always make for comfortable viewing.

The stalling proved adequate, but there was a desperation in his pursuit of the action, as if he was chasing the glories of his youth. A tackle that was reckless, even if it did connect with the ball marginally before he caught Lee Hendrie with his arm, earned Gascoigne his tenth booking of the season, bringing him closer to a brush with the authorities over his disciplinary record.

It is another department of the Football Association from which Gascoigne wishes to hear. The prospects of a return to the England side was a more absorbing topic than Saturday's match, in which Middlesbrough forced the visiting team back, but only allowed Villa to display their well-ar-

oused back three. Once, Gascoigne would have pierced the chain mail. He cannot do so nowadays, because there is no longer enough spring left in his legs to take him past opponents. Gascoigne knows it and so do the men who face him. On occasion, he passes a foot over the ball, as if threatening trickery, but the defenders never panic any more. They realise he will have to halt, pause and

pick out a team-mate, who is, inevitably, less gifted.

Gascoigne's technique, though, is undamaged. Until arthritis takes hold, he will always be able to take an awkwardly dropping ball, as he did in our moment against Villa, and turn it into a perfect, volleyed 20-yard pass. Such mastery is precious and, with better players around him, international football might just suit him better than a grinding encounter in the FA Carling Premiership.

Villa could certainly have found a use for Gascoigne in midfield. Still lacking the injured Paul Merson, John Gregory's side were banal and inaccurate in their approach-work and an unacceptable result had to be laboriously extracted from the afternoon by, in particular, two strong and dependable centre backs, Ugo Ehiogu and Gareth Southgate.

Middlesbrough, after three successive defeats, were insistent in their efforts and might have scored, after 38

minutes, when Michael Oakes, the Villa goalkeeper, paved at a Curtis Fleming cross, leaving Dean Gordon to strike a drive that was blocked by Southgate. Otherwise, there were only unavailing deflections and competent saves. The division of the spoils gladdened the managers more than the spectators.

There had been too much dull industry. "You can play well without scoring any goals," Julian Joachim stated in the match programme, while explaining his role. There is truth in his words, but what sort of game would we have if diligence completely expunged flair? The people at the Riverside Stadium on Saturday who made up a record attendance of 34,643 had the answer.

ASHTON VILLA (3-5-2): G. Schwarzer — S. Vickery, G. Pollister, C. Fleming, N. McDonald, P. Gascoigne, A. Townsend, D. Gordon — N. Pearce (sub: J. Taylor, 69), S. Wilson, R. Scovenga, G. Grayson, G. Berry — S. Watson, R. Scovenga, G. Grayson, J. Taylor, L. Hendrie, A. Wright — J. Hendrie. Referee: R. Farnie.

MIDDLESBROUGH (0-0): D. Petrescu.

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MIDDLESBROUGH (0-0): D. Petrescu.

Decoding the Di Canio letters

George Caulkin reads between the lines after Saturday's goalless draw between Sheffield Wednesday and Tottenham

Wednesday and Tottenham

small token of my esteem.

And please let me know how

Wednesday are faring.

Mrs Di Canio.

Dear Mrs Di Canio,

First off, can I just say how

much the lads appreciated

the side of Parma ham you

sent us with your letter. I

must admit, I was a bit

cobidous — I thought you

were dropping a hint about

where Paulo might like to

play next season — but, to be

fair, it was top-notch stuff.

Having said that, some of

the English boys weren't

overly keen (didn't go with

their beans, apparently), but I

concerned that either you or

his team-mates on the school

team might consider him idle.

Only that afternoon, he got

out of bed to tell me so.

Of course, we will gladly

comply with your demand to

seek an independent medical

assessment of Paulo's

condition and, as a

further display of our

good faith, we would

be happy to continue

washing the team's dirty kit — although

perhaps not in public,

if you understand my

meaning. In the

meantime, I enclose a

small token of my esteem.

Hibernian
gain from
consistent
display.
flying

Nationwide League: Bolton underline their attacking potency with easy victory

Venables bemused by supine Palace

Bolton Wanderers 3
Crystal Palace 0

By STEPHEN WOOD

TERRY VENABLES, the Crystal Palace manager, stood motionless on the touchline for much of a toruous afternoon at the Reebok Stadium yesterday, possibly wondering why he was there. Renowned for his tactical awareness, his players looked as disorganized as a professional team could be, handing Bolton Wanderers an easy return to the play-off positions in the Nationwide League first division.

By contrast, Colin Todd, the Bolton manager, was an animated figure, always cajoling his charges, sometimes criticising them. Rarely does he appear to be a contented individual, even when his players are as superior as they were yesterday. There is no doubt that Bolton's strength remains their potency in attack. When they put their mind to it only Sunderland, the league leaders, can match their threat and, indeed, their goalscoring feats. Against Palace, the contest was over by the 23rd minute and distinctly uncompetitive by the 33rd.

By then, Bolton were three goals to the good. Palace appeared to employ four at the back, with Hayden Mullins protecting them by virtue of his defensive role in midfield. Such a move may have underlined the respect in which Bolton's capabilities were held by Venables, but not helped by the haphazard way in which it was carried out, the system was of precious little use.

Both clubs were relegated from the FA Caring Premiership last season and both managers have insisted that the squads they now possess are good enough to take them back up to the top flight immediately. In Venables's case, that claim looks rather hollow and Palace's position of fourteenth today — 11 points behind the play-off zone — flatters them.

They have won only twice on their travels this season and, to add to Venables's problems, there is the speculation over Matt Jansen, the talented young striker. Coveted by Premiership clubs, including Blackburn Rovers and Newcastle United, Jansen was

absent yesterday. There were rumours that he was spending the day in Newcastle, getting acquainted with his future surroundings.

Venables said: "The lad came to see me and told me that, because of all the speculation surrounding him, he was not mentally tuned in to play. That disappointed me. He could be on the point of a move. Something could happen this week."

Palace had to part with Paul Warhurst last week, sold to Bolton for £800,000. They could have done with Warhurst yesterday and Venables added: "It was a strange time to sell Paul, but that's life. Everyone's a bit low at the moment, but at least we showed some character and aggression to stem the flow of Ipswich Town. It wraps itself around you, convinces you that, even at a level below the multi-million-pound FA Caring Premiership, there is life and regeneration within professional football. Ipswich, now, as once before, is a place of Dutch imported 'bulbs' and home-grown youth, have had a quite extraordinary influence on the English game, out of all proportion to its size or wealth."

Bolton's quartet of players from Scandinavia were, as ever, central to that flow. Todd has insisted that they speak only English around the club, for fear of cliques appearing within the dressing-room. Their understanding on the field is certainly undisputed, with Frandsen the most impressive.

It was Frandsen, the Denmark international, who won a free kick after three minutes, from which Bob Taylor headed in a cross by Scott Sellars at the far post. Arneur Gurnlaugsson, the Iceland international, then supplied Michael Johansen, another Dane, who sold dummy to Crowe and Tuttle before placing his right-foot shot past Kevin Miller, the Palace goalkeeper.

Ten minutes later, Frandsen played in Claus Jensen, the third Denmark player, and, despite calls for outside from the visiting fans, he rounded Miller and side-footed into the Football Association this empty net.

"Winning is a good habit," Todd said. "We are earning the right to win games by the way we are playing and creating chances, but this clean sheet pleases me just as much."

BOLTON WANDERERS (4-4-2): J Joseph; S. M. Phillips, M. Walker, M. Williams, R. Elliott, B. Taylor, M. Jansen, C. Jansen, P. Frandsen, S. Sellars, sub: R. Gardner, 70. — A. Gurnlaugsson, B. Taylor (sub: 70). — A. Gurnlaugsson, B. Taylor (sub: 70).

CRYSTAL PALACE (4-4-2): K. Mills, D. S. Button, O. Tait, J. Crown (sub: O. Arnesen, 63), C. Foster, H. Mullins, P. Zingg, S. Rodger (sub: N. Pinto, 74). — M. Johansen (sub: M. Bon, 57), L. Broby, R. Pearson.

Queens Park Rangers 2
Sunderland 2

By NICK SZCZEPANIK

IF AND when Sunderland take their place in the FA Caring Premiership next season — and results on Saturday made "when" more likely than ever — Peter Reid, the manager, knows that he will have to strengthen his squad. He is equally aware that he cannot afford to do it at the expense of the team spirit, which enabled his side to come from behind and claim a deserved point, despite being reduced to ten men for the entire second half, at Loftus Road.

According to Reid, this spirit was born out of despair during a stop for a drink on the way back to the North East after defeat in the Nationwide League first division play-off final against Charlton Athletic last season. "It was crushing," he recalled, "but we got together and that was the catalyst." Of course, spirit is insuffi-

cient by itself and it was as much Reid's tactical nous that determined the outcome on Saturday, as Rangers threatened to become only the third team this season to beat his side in a league match.

Reid had left out Michael Bridges to accommodate the return from injury of Kevin Phillips and the decision looked to have been a good one when Phillips volleyed Sunderland into the lead after 32 minutes. Yet when Danny Maddix headed an equalizer for Rangers and Kevin Ball, the Sunderland captain, was dismissed for a late tackle just before the interval, Reid's men were up against it.

"He [Bridges] goes past play-

ers, something that in the modern game gets defenders on the back foot," Reid said, ad-

mitting also that leaving Bridges out had been "a massive decision".

Gerry Francis, the Rangers manager, noted that the forward riches available to Reid give him an advantage over most opponents, but he also found plenty to enthuse over in his own team's performance. "There's no doubt that Sunderland are by far the best team in the division," he said. "Two or three months ago, if we'd gone behind to a side like Sunderland, we'd have folded, but we matched them."

The result gives Sunderland

a nine-point lead at the top of

the first division in advance of

the visit next Sunday of Ipswich Town to the Stadium of Light. "Not a bad one, next week," Reid said, "but we'll be up for it." Sounds like team spirit.

QUEENS PARK RANGERS (4-4-3): L. McBride, K. Reidy, S. Morris, G. Maddie — A. Henrie, M. Rock, G. Peacock, I. Beresford, C. Kinnear, D. Dowson, K. Ball — D. Phillips, D. Phillips (sub: D. Phillips, 45), S. Rodger (sub: M. Bon, 57), S. Rodger, O. Williams (sub: M. Smith, 74min), A. McVea, P. Butler, C. Maddix — A. Ross, I. Clark, K. Ball, D. Phillips, G. Quinn, J. Murphy — K. Phillips, G. Quinn, S. Matheson.

Reid's men, something that in the modern game gets defenders on the back foot," Reid said, ad-

Walsall in distinguished company

Walsall 2
Gillingham 1

By BILL EGAR

A GLANCE at the top of the Nationwide League second division can provoke nostalgia and an assumption that pedigree will be rewarded by promotion. Yet while Walsall lacked the history of some of their rivals, a bright future awaits if they maintain the spirit that has lifted them unexpectedly to second place.

Since taking charge of a team that just avoided relegation to the third division last season, Ray Graydon, the

BBC hit the bull's eye with two scribbling ladies

There was a pleasant bar at the main Press Centre at the Olympic Games in Atlanta. By one of those run quirks of fate, I only found British journalists inside it. Occasionally, we remarked on this. "The British are not the only drinking journalists," one of our number said. "Somewhere very near here there is a bar being drank dry by the Dutch."

It is not the tradition of alcohol that is unique, because an awful lot of nations do that. It is the tradition of standing up drinking beer and, as Eric Bristow himself so rightly pointed out, you can take darts out of the pub, but you can never take the pub out of darts. Which meant that it was inevi-

table that, in time, the British hegemony in the world of darts would be ceded to the Dutch.

Ray Barneveld is not exactly an extrovert. He would not stand out in any pub in Britain; just another sturdy man valiantly not pretending that he isn't going bald. He looks to be no stranger to his country's best-known export, the one that comes in green this.

Various sports have what you might call the "world series syndrome", a world championship fought for by a single nation. In this country, the world championships of snooker and darts are seldom contested, still less won, by any non-Brit. But now we have Barney and his follow-

ers: one whiff of a Dutch success anywhere in the world, and the television screen turns bright orange.

There is generally an air of great good humour and festival when the Dutch have a decent sporting run on their hands and descend upon it in numbers. Besides, the Dutch and the Brits have always rather got on. This is not true of the Brits and the French — I suspect it is because the French insist on doing their drinking sitting down. It will be a while before we have a French world champion at darts.

Run things darts. There are plenty of sports in which television gives you a better view, but with darts, television gives you the only view. True, the

Lakeside Country Club has been packing in 1,200 people a session for the Embassy world championships, which concluded last night, but no one there can see what is going on.

The actual sporting part of darts is only comprehensible on television: specifically, only comprehensible in their unique, split-screen master-shot, with the relevant area of board on one side and the face

of the player on the other. If the sport has a fascination, it is one that it shares with golf. It is about the influence of the opponent on a player's closed skills. A closed skill, in sporting jargon, is a skill that — physically, anyway — your opponent cannot interfere with. A golf shot: a dart throw: a triple-salchow: a clear round: sport is full of examples of closed skills. In golf, in darts,

in skating, in showjumping, opponents are not allowed to tackle, but they can affect the opposition with their poise, their presence, their performance. That is how darts works: the excellence of one player will force another into error, or, sometimes, into greater excellence. A 140 is followed by an embarrassing 41 — or by a 180.

But the BBC television coverage has lost all faith with the actual action. Cut-aways rule. There are more cut-aways than action shots: fans cheering, fans looking disappointed, fans drinking. And, especially, the cameras home in on the harrowed faces of tortured and traumatised women. These are the wives of the play-

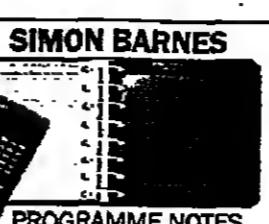
ers: in agony, not just because they married a darts player — a tough enough break, in all conscience — but also because their man is now up there ping-pong in the 180s. Or not, of course.

One of the semi-finals had that important aspect of any darts tournament: a really quite incredibly fat person. This was Andy "The Viking" Fordham: a bearded, long hair and an unfortunate upward-looking camera angle that made the most of his over-stated mammmary development.

Fordham moves with the delicate, finicky grace you often find in the truly obese. And then a cut-away to The Viking's mum, in anguish as her little lad lost the plot. And then

— my favourite this — a cut-away to two middle-aged ladies in glasses, wearing identical blue waistcoats and scribbling furiously with identical pencils.

Who were they? Were they adding up the bar takings? Playing bingo, or battle ships? Composing music, or poetry? I adore the fact that the camera turned to them at least half-a-dozen times in two hours of television, and each time the ladies were doing exactly the same thing — scribbling away and looking through their glasses — and no one ever mentioned them. Darts is an area of life that is not exactly chock-full of mystery: it was good television to make good that lack.

SIMON BARNES
PROGRAMME NOTES

Houllier's men spook mischievous souls who turned up for a laugh at their expense

Defenders of the faith spoil the fun



Given the number of times that I've seen Liverpool's defenders picked out for special mournful attention by Alan Hansen on *Match of the Day*, it was quite a strange experience watching them play on Saturday at Highbury. How odd that in real life Phil Babb, Steve Staunton and Jamie Carragher are not (every ten seconds or so) freeze-framed hopelessly out of position and circled in white.

It was a cruel disappointment. Sometimes you go to football in mischievous spirit: you want to see for yourself just how bad the Liverpool defence is. You want to have a fine old laugh at David James. So, when the whole visiting team-play as a defensive wall, locking hands across the pitch and performing the football equivalent of the cygnet dance in *Swan Lake* — I have to say, it removes a substantial slice of the pleasure.

Still, football support is all about observing trends and remaking the story of what's going on. The strengths and weaknesses of Liverpool were sufficiently well-known to be rather boring, after all; on Saturday, Gérard Houllier certainly made his team the talking point, by doing something supremely out of the ordinary, to lay the ghost of Roy Evans. A defensive triumph, plus Paul Ince wasn't sent off and Michael Owen didn't score. It was spoopy.

Meanwhile, Arsène Wenger's team performed more or less as you would predict. Despite the substitutions caused by injury, Arsenal's roundhead defence was solid and strong; its cavalier midfield was thrusting, curly-haired and inventive; and its pathetic forwards feebly wrote poetry with big feathers while coughing blood into a hankie.

Same old, same old, as you might say. Take Marc Overmars. He raced about tirelessly and devotedly, doing the work of five men: a loosened bandage flapped unregarded at his injured knee. And why? Because he can't play any other way. He sprints, turns, sprints, beats a defender, turns, sprints towards the corner. Does his tongue really hang out like a sheepdog, or do I imagine it? One thing is sure: if Overmars were a real sheepdog, he'd be the worthy star of a series of animal-horror movies. They could call him Dutch Sprint, turn, race, woof.

"Fetch the dynamite out of the mine-shaft, Dutch!" they'd say, and off he'd go at breakneck speed. You can just see him. His legs a blur, he circles back to collect a baby from a blazing shack, emerging singed around the ears. Woof, woof. Well done, Dutch! Here's a bone. Music swells. (The end).

But, as I mentioned, Arsenal's story isn't changing much at the moment. There is a regular trickle of success, but the triumph is mainly empty of pride, because something Dennis-shaped is missing. Every few weeks, Dennis Bergkamp appears to be fit and able to play — and then turns out that he isn't; or wasn't; or isn't now, anyway. Hopes rise cautiously, level out for a bit, falter, and then sink again. One wonders how long a player known for changing the course of games can sustain such a reputation without actually playing. Meanwhile, Nicolas Anelka, Luis Boa Morte and Christopher Wreh fall about aimlessly in a kind of limbo, taking it in turns to strike comically wide of goal, as if there's no point trying until Dennis's Second Coming.

So Arsenal dominated on Saturday, but couldn't score. Meanwhile, Liverpool huddled together

at the back (attractive in yellow), and occasionally shot the ball forward, over everybody's heads, to Owen, who couldn't score either. Owen's best chance required him to use a left foot (which he doesn't have). It's a well-known fact, apparently, that when Owen's little face clouds over with concentration as he kamps towards goal at St Etienne, scattering Argentinian defenders like skittles, he is not asking himself: "Mmm, which foot shall I use?" as I always supposed. When it boils down to it, amazingly, he's only got the one.

How could such a frustrating afternoon be made worse for a sensation-seeker? Well, interestingly,

by two French coaches good-naturedly patting each other on the back at the press conference and rehearsing an array of affirmative abstract nouns. I don't know why this was so annoying, but it was. Liverpool's composure, character and discipline in defence were admired by both men: strength, solidity, blah, blah, blah, composure, discipline. Houllier declared that he didn't mind a bit of tension between his players, as it was a sign of "mental toughness". Which is nonsense, of course, since tension (ie, fighting) usually arises between people who are volatile and stupid. But you cannot deny that "tension is a sign of mental toughness" sounds quite philosophical when delivered in a cultured French accent with a complacent smile.

Meanwhile, Wenger was not only supportive of Houllier but determinedly uncritical of Liverpool's niggardly performance. "We cannot ask our opponents to play a certain way," he shrugged. "I don't want to judge what other teams do. They set you a problem and you must solve it. I have to respect what they did." Having enough antagonism on his plate at the moment, perhaps Wenger was simply being prudent in not stirring more controversy.

Will they remain chums? If one may borrow an outmoded argot from Popeye in *The French Connection*, having been Prog One for so long in English football, how does it feel for Wenger to face the possible threat of demotion to Prog Two? Houllier is not only turning his team round, but is personable and clever. He is evidently the aca-

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SPORTS LETTERS

Clubs should punish cheats

From Mr W.A. Watson

Sir, Arsène Wenger complains (report, January 11) about the "divers and cheats" and adds his name to the weekly list of managers who continue to be refereeless. The standard of refereeing is probably at a low ebb and Wenger, Ferguson, Strachan et al are both correct and justified in bemoaning the level of cheating that is entering the game as never before.

They are wrong, however, in blaming the hapless referee. It is not the referees who are cheating but the players. The individual managers are in charge of the team and it is therefore surely reasonable to expect the buck to rest on the manager's desk.

Instead of complaining about opposing players and referees week after week, it is time that these highly-paid apologists and complainers did their job properly. If they are so concerned about cheating, will they discipline their own guilty players? I suspect not, but I put this proposition forward as an open letter to all league managers (Premiership or otherwise) to have the courage to go into print and confirm that they will take action against their own players in this way.

If there are no takers to my invitation, I must pose the simple question — why?

Yours faithfully,
W. A. WATSON

22 Ashby Road, Kegworth,
Derby DE74 2DH

From Mr Ian Todd

Sir, Arsène Wenger is right to decry cheating by players, but there is a simpler, if less likely, way of curbing this than asking the FA Premier League to view a video of every game.

The message that Wenger preaches would be more effectively delivered by his own brethren. There is no reason why Alan Curtisley should

not impose an equivalent internal discipline by dropping Redfern for the next game. Similarly, Vialli might drop Leboeuf in their joint acknowledgement that he was lucky to escape a red card. The Corinthian ethos will be more telling if delivered by the player's own employer than some neutral third party.

In contrast, Wenger is wrong in his defence of Vieira. Surely the point of impact is irrelevant. The critical factor is the use and manner of delivery of the elbow.

Yours faithfully,
IAN TODD,
Chairman, Supporters' Clubs Federation,
8 Wyke Close,
Ipswich TW7 5PE

From Mr Jeffrey Morgan

Sir, in football the sending-off is supposed to be the ultimate deterrent to the cynical professional foul, but, on the evidence of recent years, it is obviously not having the desired effect.

Statistical analysis of the games in which a player has been sent off shows that playing with only ten men is not a great disadvantage. It may hinder the attacking play of the penalised side, but if does not, for a variety of reasons, make it much easier for the defensive side to score.

Defensive players, when deciding whether or not to bring

down an attacking player, are simply playing the percentages. If a striker is running clear on goal, the defender will always bring him down if he can, even if it means being sent off. The defender is sensibly calculating that stopping an almost certain goal is worth the penalty of reducing his own team to ten men, because playing with ten men is not nearly as damaging as conceding a goal.

In my opinion, the only remedy is to change the rules so that whenever a player is sent off, a penalty goal is also awarded, regardless of where on the pitch the foul is committed.

Draconian it may be, but the professional foul would

simply be eliminated at a stroke of the rulebook pen!

Yours sincerely,

JEFFREY MORGAN,
Hollyhurst,
Church Street,
Hampton Lucy CV35 8BE

From Mr A. Copley

Sir, I fly radio control and free flight electric model aeroplanes and am not sure that David Powell is correct in stating (December 31) that these sports deserve a wider audience. One of the advantages and pleasures is the limited general coverage. There are plenty of monthly magazines.

Yours sincerely,

A. COBLEY,
2 Main Street,
Hutton Cranswick,
Worcester,
WR5 2ET

e-mail, including a postal address and daytime telephone number, should be sent to: sport.letters@the-times.co.uk

Iniquity of cricket toss

From Mr Michael Joseph

Sir, I have read that the countries are proposing a change in the toss so that the visiting side has the choice in order to compensate for home ground knowledge and advantage.

Cricket is a game of complex skills and it seems inequitable that, in a Test series, the toss should play such a significant part. If tossing a coin does involve a special skill, it would be useful if it was introduced without delay into our captain's training manual.

Why cannot the rules be changed so that the toss is effective for the first game in a series of, say, five matches and then the choice alternates, with a further toss for the fifth game?

clubs, shows throughout the country and exhibition flying displays without the build-up on the sports pages.

That television does not interest itself in these minority sports is part of their charm.

Yours sincerely,
A. COBLEY,
R.N.G. STONE,
2 Main Street,
Hutton Cranswick,
Worcester,
WR5 2ET

I appreciate that the winning of the toss is not an automatic step to success and weather vagaries can upset the best calculations, but at least the heavy element of luck that exists at present would be largely eliminated.

Yours sincerely,
M. S. JOSEPH,
33 York Terrace West,
NW1 4QA

Ashes strategy

From Mr R.N.G. Stone

Sir, Though the other proposals likely to be debated by the International Cricket Council last week are to be resisted, there is one (report, January 2) that sounds most attractive: apparently, the Asian bloc will propose "a retrospective life ban on Shane Warne and Mark Waugh".

I cannot imagine what this would mean, but if it entails that all Warne's wickets and all Waugh's runs in their careers to date are to be discounted, and the results of the Tests in which they played adjusted accordingly, then by next week England will be in possession of the Ashes. How can Lord MacLaurin of Krebsworth possibly vote against?

Yours faithfully,
R.N.G. STONE,
2 Main Street,
Hutton Cranswick,
Worcester,
WR5 2ET

This week in THE TIMES



Tomorrow: After their winning start against Australia yesterday, England's one-day cricketers take on Sri Lanka, the world champions.

Wednesday: FA Cup third-round replays — can Kevin Keegan's expensive army defeat Southampton at Craven Cottage?

Thursday: Golf's European Tour begins — where else? — in Cape Town. John Hopkins on the 1st tee looks ahead to the coming season.

Football Saturday: Match by match previews of the Premiership, plus football's finest team of columnists — Frank Leboeuf on life at the top of the league, Danny Baker, Robert Elms and Alison Rudd.

David Hands, rugby correspondent, sees the French champions beaten in style at Ravenhill

Red hand of history beckons for Ulster

A way with the politics, with those whose narrow views encompass profit and not sport. This was one of the great days in rugby's history, when the breath of a passionate crowd of 20,000 drove their white-shirted heroes to a 33-27 victory that few had envisaged and which could yet do the same when Ulster play Colomiers in the European Cup final at Lansdowne Road on January 30.

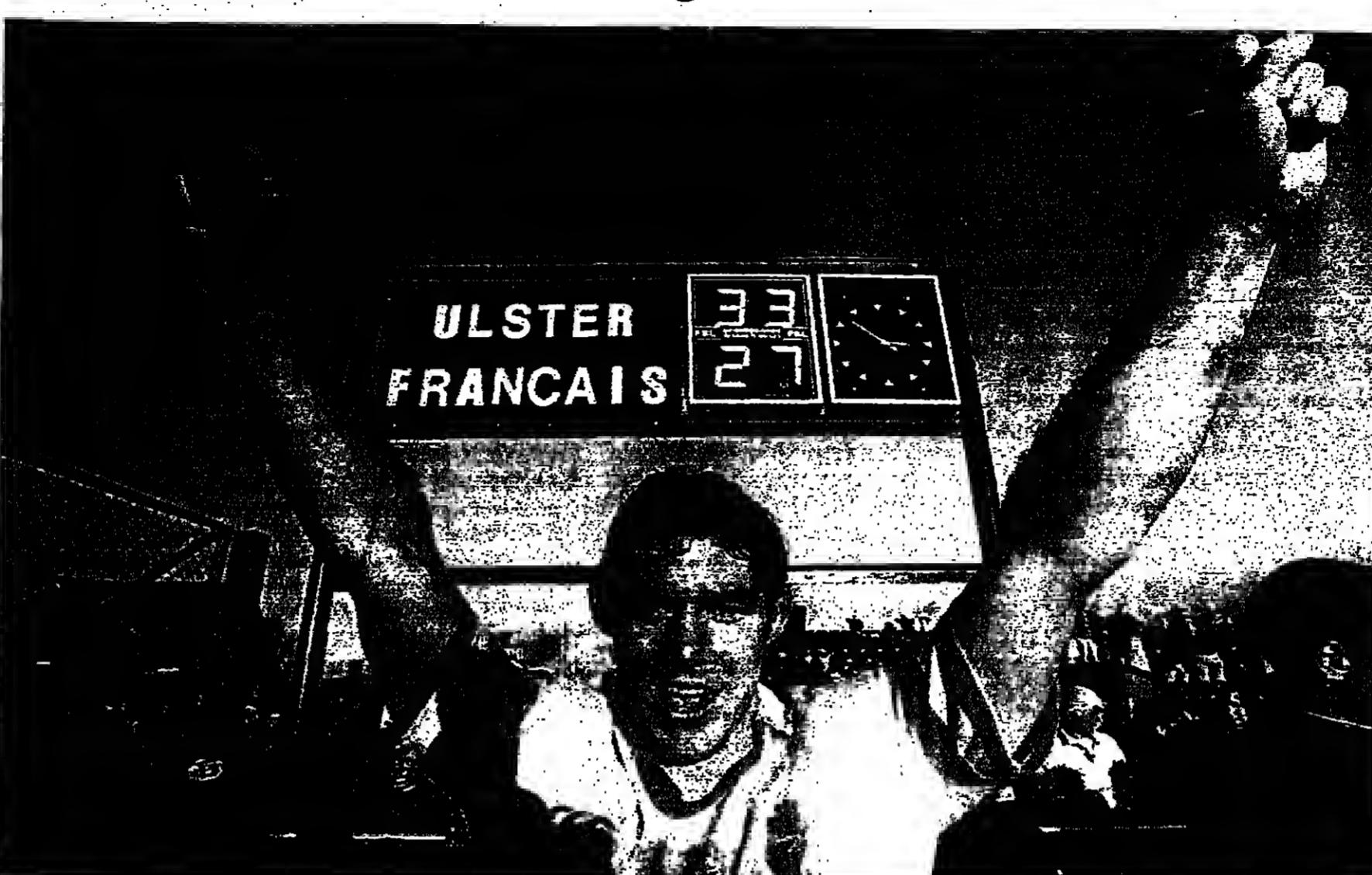
This is not a great Ulster team: two of the province's locks of considerable stature, Paddy Johns and Jeremy Davidson, play their trade elsewhere, their scrum struggled throughout at Ravenhill on Saturday, they were down to their last centre, and Sheldon Coulter and Andy Park, their wings, are not even assured of their club places at Ballymena. But come the hour and the XV became an expression of the longing of a community, not just in Ulster but from all over Ireland.

Observers there speak of a sporting void, most recently occupied by Jack Charlton's football team in the Republic, but now waiting to be filled. Rugby could do it, if an Ireland team can sustain its acknowledged ability to achieve more than just famous but isolated victories. Ulster, Ireland's first European finalists, have shown that they can: from poor beginnings, they have won seven successive matches, three of them against the cream of French club rugby, Toulouse (twice) and now Stade Français.

"What Europe has done for us is to destroy the mystique of French rugby," Donal Lenihan, the Ireland team manager, said. Within eight days, Lenihan will be able to judge whether that is truly so: a week after Ulster's final against Colomiers (who beat an injury-ravaged Perpignan 10-6 in Toulouse), Ireland play France in the Five Nations Championship, also at Lansdowne Road, a fixture that they have not won since 1983.

They will surely do so with David Humphreys at fly half. The little Dungannon man, captain in the regrettable absence of Mark McCall — to whose off-field leadership Humphreys paid tribute — showed all the wit and tactical acumen apparently lacking in the Ireland back division. His try, three minutes after half-time, was at once a statement of intent and a brilliantly-executed ploy that proved to be a turning point in the game.

It also demonstrated that Ulster were not there only to disrupt but also to play constructive rugby. Stade Français, the French champions and blessed with outstanding players throughout the team, were



Mason, who kicked 20 points for his team, celebrates the victory that put Ulster into the final of the European Cup. Photographs: Mike Cooper/Allsport

reminiscent of Brive in the final of last season against Bath, when the Frenchmen lost their collective tactical sense; for a fortnight, Stade had prepared for a day of wind and rain and muddy going, yet, when they discovered "sunshine and a firm ground, a player as experienced as Diego Dominguez fell down."

His side could have won the game through the forwards: of their three tries, the first came from a poshovor scrum, the others from a maul after a close-range lineout. All Dominguez had to do was ensure that the game was played around the Ulster 22 and kick the goals that followed; but he knew he had good backs and dwelled too long on the ball before using them, leaving a midfield that Ulster had identified as not having the steepest hands in the

world to be clattered by the voracious Ian Cunningham.

The English-speakers among the Stade players admitted that there had been a loss of equilibrium as the game continually edged away from them. There was an inclina-

tion to blame marginal decisions by Jim Fleming, the referee, that erred towards Ulster, but the statistics show that to be no excuse: having been critical of the match arrangements and persuaded Euro-

pean Rugby Cup Ltd (ERC) to

change the match-day from a Friday night to Saturday, Stade had every reason to believe that their ambition of becoming European champions could be realised.

"But the crowd were so close to

us, they were so passionate, there

was no way we could let them down, never mind ourselves," Humphreys said. "Over the last two or three months, people have come to see us as spectators and gone away supporters." Such backing proved to be inspirational for forwards such as Mark Blair and Stephen McKinty, the veteran, who claimed the first try after rolling round the front of a lineout.

Yet no player did more to win the game than Simon Mason, the full back, who rose to fame at Newcastle and Orrell, then struggled with Richmond. In Ulster, he has found assurance and goal-kicking of the utmost security: 20 points were added to his 196 points scored in 15 previous games this season, among them an assertive dropped goal early on that punished a wayward clearance by Dominguez.



Humphreys, the Ulster captain, rounds off the move that he initiated by scoring his second-half try.

Nevertheless, few would have taken victory for granted when Ulster turned round leading only 11-10. It was, it seemed, only a question of time before the Stade forwards took a stranglehold, until Humphreys skipped to the blind side of a scrum and popped a perfect chip-kick over the defence. Coulter took it on the full, drew the cover and fed Humphreys on the outside, the fly half beating Christophe Moni in a 45-metre sprint to the line.

Instantly, Ulster unleashed another move that released Park into space: the wing chipped too, Vians was gobbed up on his own line and penalised for not releasing the ball. Mason's penalty goal gave Ulster ten points in as many minutes and, when Humphreys snapped over another dropped goal, the crowd could scarcely believe it.

But Stade came once to within four points of Ulster, once to within three and, at 30-27 with 12 minutes remaining, a final place was less than secure. Then Mason, from 44 metres, drilled over his fifth penalty goal and, against inspired Ulster tackling, French cohesion and the chance of a match-winning try and conversion faded on the triumphant cheers echoing up to the Castlecaugh Hills.

SCORERS: Ulster: Tries: McGlynn (16 min), Humphreys (43). Conversions: Mason (Penalty 19, 21, 24, 27, 30). Penalties: Mason (19), Humphreys (30). Stade Français: Tries: Jules (2, 21, 50), Leivaumont (55). Conversions: Dominguez (3). Penalties: Mason (2) (12, 56).

SCORING SEQUENCE: (Ulster first) 3-0, 6-3, 11-3, 11-10 (half-time), 18-10, 21-10, 24-10, 24-17, 28-17.

ULSTER: S. Mason, S. Coulter, J. Cunningham, J. Bell, A. Park, D. Humphreys, A. Matchett, J. Fitzpatrick, A. Clarke, R. Irwin (rep: G. Leslie, 54min), M. Blair, S. McKinty, C. Coulter, A. Hard, A. McWhirter (rep: D. Topping, 73).

STADE FRANÇAIS: S. Vians, A. Gomes, R. Domenech, J. J. Dominguez, C. Lassauze, S. Masenhol (rep: S. Simon, 50), L. Pedraza (rep: V. Moretto, 50), P. de Villiers, H. Chastanet, D. Escoffre, C. Moni, R. Park (rep: J. J. Dominguez, 50), C. Jullien (rep: J. J. Dominguez, 55). Referee: J. Fleming (Scotland).

□ Two critical meetings this week could help shape the future of European competition: Brian Balister, the chairman of the Rugby Football Union's management board, and Francis Baron, his chief executive, are due to meet French federation officials in Paris today, while, on Friday, representatives of the English and French clubs meet.

They will do so in an atmosphere on the French side that is less than enamoured of ERC, the present tournament organisers. There is a belief among the leading French clubs, not obviously justified by results, that the organisers have leant over backwards to help home-union teams and the French, whose existing participation agreement ends this season, know that they are in a strong position to determine the future of the competition.

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THE TIMES MONDAY JANUARY 11 1999

SPORT 37

RACING: FIRST-SEASON TRAINER KEEPS CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL OPTIONS OPEN FOR SMART HURDLER

Behrajan helps Daly deliver early success

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE cry of most first-season trainers is invariably akin to that of Richard II when he uttered the immortal line about swiping his kingdom for a decent nag. Henry Daly is a fortunate exception to the rule.

When he took over from Captain Tim Forster at Downton Hall Stables in Shropshire last summer, not only did he inherit an enviable collection of proven and promising chasers, along with a group of up-and-comers, he also had an unex-

RICHARD EVANS

reward bonus in the shape of a house made a dozen years earlier.

In the mid-1980s, Daly and Simon Marsh, now racing manager to the Lloyd Webbers, were working in Lexington, the heart of the American血统 industry, and, after a particularly enjoyable dinner, Marsh promised that if DJ's ambition to become a trainer materialised he would get together a group of friends and send him a horse.

A drinks party during

Royal Ascot last summer, Marsh bumped into Daly, who had just announced he was taking over from Forster, and the promise of yesteryear was put into action.

The result was that Anthony Bromley, right-hand man to David Minton at the British Bloodstock Agency, bought an Aga Khan cast-off, by Arazi out of a Mill Reef mare.

The highlight of his Flat career had been to get within 13 lengths of Sagamore, subsequent winner of the Arc, over a mile and a half in France.

The purchase price was £10,000, shared by a decidedly upmarket syndicate of owners consisting of Johnny Weatherby, chairman of Weatherby's and a trustee of Ascot, Lady Lloyd Webber, Mark Wiggin, owner of Downton Hall, and Rupert, his younger brother, and Jeremy Graham, along with Marsh and Daly.

Daly opted for the latter, in which his runner would receive a handy weight allowance, and, in keeping with the Forster school of pessimism, thought at best he would pick up some useful place money. This time the winning distance was 16 lengths and a starting price of 9/2.

Daly, 32, spent time with Paul Cole and Kim Bailey be-

fore joining Forster in 1991 and is a trainer with a big future. After not rushing his horses early in the season, his patience is paying dividends and winners are flowing.

Behrajan is 10-1 second favourite for the Triumph Hurdle, but Daly said yesterday: "He doesn't really give the impression of being a Triumph type. He is a huge horse, about 16.3. I might enter him for the Triumph, the Supreme Novices' and the Sun Alliance and

Tony McCoy was banned for six days (January 18-23 inclusive) after falling foul of the whip rules again at Sandown on Saturday, where the four-year-old was entered for two races: a competitive juvenile hurdle and the high-class Tolworth Hurdle in which Hidebound would be a strongly fancied short-priced favourite.

Daly opted for the latter, in

which his runner would receive a handy weight allowan-

Leicester card in doubt

THE meeting at Leicester tomorrow hinges on a 3pm inspection today, although course officials described the meeting as having a "fighting chance" of going ahead.

Recent heavy rain has left parts of the hurdle track waterlogged, but the head groundsmen, Jimmy Stevenson, said: "The hurdles course is water-

logged in places but it has improved slightly."

Fakenham today looks set to beat the weather despite a frost on Saturday. David Hunter, clerk of the course, said: "I'm pretty confident we will be OK." Prospects for Fontwell were described as "very good" by the track's chief executive, Jonathon Garratt.

What may not prove so easy will be gauging the reaction of his great mentor to having a leading fancy for a hurdle race in the yard. The Captain, a chasing man through and through, regarded hurdling as a necessary evil.

"I would not have thought that when he handed the licence over to me, having the second favourite for the Triumph would have been at the top of his list," Daly said.

Then decide. But it is a nice problem to have."

What may not prove so easy will be gauging the reaction of his great mentor to having a leading fancy for a hurdle race in the yard. The Captain, a chasing man through and through, regarded hurdling as a necessary evil.

"I would not have thought that when he handed the licence over to me, having the second favourite for the Tri-

umph would have been at the top of his list," Daly said.

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Behrajan on the way to victory at Sandown on Saturday

Archive Footage shrugs off weight of history

BY OUR IRISH RACING CORRESPONDENT

ARCHIVE FOOTAGE sent off at 25-1, gave jockey David Evans ample compensation for missing out on last year's Ladbroke winner, Graphic Equaliser, when taking the big race on Saturday in a finish dominated by outsiders.

His weight-carrying performance equalled that of Barnbrook Again, who also won under Iasi Blb, and he finished nine lengths clear of the 40-1 shot Daraheen Chief, with Its Time For A Win (25-1) four lengths third.

It was the biggest success for Evans, 30, who was riding just the 50th winner of his career. Last season he lost out when Graphic Equaliser was switched from Frank Lacy's yard to Arthur Moore's, but this time luck was with him.

Dermot Weld, the trainer of Archive Footage, said: "Tony McCoy was to ride but found out on Tuesday that he couldn't. I'm delighted for David, who is a great worker and team player."

Weld, who saddled Archive Footage's dam, Trusted Partner, to win the 1988 Irish 1,000 Guineas, raised his no forlorn hope despite the price.

"I think I said he would run in the first four, but when the weights went up I was more hopeful than confident," Weld added. He now plans to tackle the County Hurdle at Cheltenham in March.

Evans said: "He was always travelling well. Coming to the third last I thought I could win because I hadn't expected to be that close three out. Usually

I'm sitting in the jockey's room having finished fifth or sixth and saying I've run a blinder."

Polar Prospect finished best of the three British-trained runners in fifth, with Sader's Realm, also trained by Philip Hobbs, eleventh and New Inn, trained by Steve Goldings, last of the 24 finishers. The favourites never figured. Impulsive

BIG-RACE DETAILS

1.45 PIERRE LEOPARDSTOWN HANDICAP CHASE (220,750 mtr)
1. HOLLYBANK BUCH (N Ireland) 7-1
2. Roundabout 7-1
3. Globe Lad 7-1
4. Tally Ho 7-1
5. White Horse 4-1
6. Iasi Blb 4-1
7. 123 J. Martin or Ireland 10-1
8. 121 J. Martin or Ireland 10-1
9. 120 E. 120, E. 140, DF 140, DF 150, DF 160, DF 170, DF 180, DF 190, DF 200, DF 210, DF 220, DF 230, DF 240, DF 250, DF 260, DF 270, DF 280, DF 290, DF 300, DF 310, DF 320, DF 330, DF 340, DF 350, DF 360, DF 370, DF 380, DF 390, DF 400, DF 410, DF 420, DF 430, DF 440, DF 450, DF 460, DF 470, DF 480, DF 490, DF 500, DF 510, DF 520, DF 530, DF 540, DF 550, DF 560, DF 570, DF 580, DF 590, DF 600, DF 610, DF 620, DF 630, DF 640, DF 650, DF 660, DF 670, DF 680, DF 690, DF 700, DF 710, DF 720, DF 730, DF 740, DF 750, DF 760, DF 770, DF 780, DF 790, DF 800, DF 810, DF 820, DF 830, DF 840, DF 850, DF 860, DF 870, DF 880, DF 890, DF 900, DF 910, DF 920, DF 930, DF 940, DF 950, DF 960, DF 970, DF 980, DF 990, DF 1000, DF 1010, DF 1020, DF 1030, DF 1040, DF 1050, DF 1060, DF 1070, DF 1080, DF 1090, DF 1100, DF 1110, DF 1120, DF 1130, DF 1140, DF 1150, DF 1160, DF 1170, DF 1180, DF 1190, DF 1200, DF 1210, DF 1220, DF 1230, DF 1240, DF 1250, DF 1260, DF 1270, DF 1280, DF 1290, DF 1300, DF 1310, DF 1320, DF 1330, DF 1340, DF 1350, DF 1360, DF 1370, DF 1380, DF 1390, DF 1400, DF 1410, DF 1420, DF 1430, DF 1440, DF 1450, DF 1460, DF 1470, DF 1480, DF 1490, DF 1500, DF 1510, DF 1520, DF 1530, DF 1540, DF 1550, DF 1560, DF 1570, DF 1580, DF 1590, DF 1600, DF 1610, DF 1620, DF 1630, DF 1640, DF 1650, DF 1660, DF 1670, DF 1680, DF 1690, DF 1700, DF 1710, DF 1720, DF 1730, DF 1740, DF 1750, DF 1760, DF 1770, DF 1780, DF 1790, DF 1800, DF 1810, DF 1820, DF 1830, DF 1840, DF 1850, DF 1860, DF 1870, DF 1880, DF 1890, DF 1900, DF 1910, DF 1920, DF 1930, DF 1940, DF 1950, DF 1960, DF 1970, DF 1980, DF 1990, DF 2000, DF 2010, DF 2020, DF 2030, DF 2040, DF 2050, DF 2060, DF 2070, DF 2080, DF 2090, DF 2100, DF 2110, DF 2120, DF 2130, DF 2140, DF 2150, DF 2160, DF 2170, DF 2180, DF 2190, DF 2200, DF 2210, DF 2220, DF 2230, DF 2240, DF 2250, DF 2260, DF 2270, DF 2280, DF 2290, DF 2300, DF 2310, DF 2320, DF 2330, DF 2340, DF 2350, DF 2360, DF 2370, DF 2380, DF 2390, DF 2400, DF 2410, DF 2420, DF 2430, DF 2440, DF 2450, DF 2460, DF 2470, DF 2480, DF 2490, DF 2500, DF 2510, DF 2520, DF 2530, DF 2540, DF 2550, DF 2560, DF 2570, DF 2580, DF 2590, DF 2600, DF 2610, DF 2620, DF 2630, DF 2640, DF 2650, DF 2660, DF 2670, DF 2680, DF 2690, DF 2700, DF 2710, DF 2720, DF 2730, DF 2740, DF 2750, DF 2760, DF 2770, DF 2780, DF 2790, DF 2800, DF 2810, DF 2820, DF 2830, DF 2840, DF 2850, DF 2860, DF 2870, DF 2880, DF 2890, DF 2900, DF 2910, DF 2920, DF 2930, DF 2940, DF 2950, DF 2960, DF 2970, DF 2980, DF 2990, DF 3000, DF 3010, DF 3020, DF 3030, DF 3040, DF 3050, DF 3060, DF 3070, DF 3080, DF 3090, DF 3100, DF 3110, DF 3120, DF 3130, DF 3140, DF 3150, DF 3160, DF 3170, DF 3180, DF 3190, DF 3200, DF 3210, DF 3220, DF 3230, DF 3240, DF 3250, DF 3260, DF 3270, DF 3280, DF 3290, DF 3300, DF 3310, DF 3320, DF 3330, DF 3340, DF 3350, DF 3360, DF 3370, DF 3380, DF 3390, DF 3400, DF 3410, DF 3420, DF 3430, DF 3440, DF 3450, DF 3460, DF 3470, DF 3480, DF 3490, DF 3500, DF 3510, DF 3520, DF 3530, DF 3540, DF 3550, DF 3560, DF 3570, DF 3580, DF 3590, DF 3600, DF 3610, DF 3620, DF 3630, DF 3640, DF 3650, DF 3660, DF 3670, DF 3680, DF 3690, DF 3700, DF 3710, DF 3720, DF 3730, DF 3740, DF 3750, DF 3760, DF 3770, DF 3780, DF 3790, DF 3800, DF 3810, DF 3820, DF 3830, DF 3840, DF 3850, DF 3860, DF 3870, DF 3880, DF 3890, DF 3900, DF 3910, DF 3920, DF 3930, DF 3940, DF 3950, DF 3960, DF 3970, DF 3980, DF 3990, DF 4000, DF 4010, DF 4020, DF 4030, DF 4040, DF 4050, DF 4060, DF 4070, DF 4080, DF 4090, DF 4100, DF 4110, DF 4120, DF 4130, DF 4140, DF 4150, DF 4160, DF 4170, DF 4180, DF 4190, DF 4200, DF 4210, DF 4220, DF 4230, DF 4240, DF 4250, DF 4260, DF 4270, DF 4280, DF 4290, DF 4300, DF 4310, DF 4320, DF 4330, DF 4340, DF 4350, DF 4360, DF 4370, DF 4380, DF 4390, DF 4400, DF 4410, DF 4420, DF 4430, DF 4440, DF 4450, DF 4460, DF 4470, DF 4480, DF 4490, DF 4500, DF 4510, DF 4520, DF 4530, DF 4540, DF 4550, DF 4560, DF 4570, DF 4580, DF 4590, DF 4600, DF 4610, DF 4620, DF 4630, DF 4640, DF 4650, DF 4660, DF 4670, DF 4680, DF 4690, DF 4700, DF 4710, DF 4720, DF 4730, DF 4740, DF 4750, DF 4760, DF 4770, DF 4780, DF 4790, DF 4800, DF 4810, DF 4820, DF 4830, DF 4840, DF 4850, DF 4860, DF 4870, DF 4880, DF 4890, DF 4900, DF 4910, DF 4920, DF 4930, DF 4940, DF 4950, DF 4960, DF 4970, DF 4980, DF 4990, DF 5000, DF 5010, DF 5020, DF 5030, DF 5040, DF 5050, DF 5060, DF 5070, DF 5080, DF 5090, DF 5100, DF 5110, DF 5120, DF 5130, DF 5140, DF 5150, DF 5160, DF 5170, DF 5180, DF 5190, DF 5200, DF 5210, DF 5220, DF 5230, DF 5240, DF 5250, DF 5260, DF 5270, DF 5280, DF 5290, DF 5300, DF 5310, DF 5320, DF 5330, DF 5340, DF 5350, DF 5360, DF 5370, DF 5380, DF 5390, DF 5400, DF 5410, DF 5420, DF 5430, DF 5440, DF 5450, DF 5460, DF 5470, DF 5480, DF 5490, DF 5500, DF 5510, DF 5520, DF 5530, DF 5540, DF 5550, DF 5560, DF 5570, DF 5580, DF 5590, DF 5600, DF 5610, DF

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THE TIMES MONDAY JANUARY 11 1999

41

SATURDAY. ANYTHING BUT A DAY OF REST.

SPORT

Vision

WEEKEND

metro

the times
magazine

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THE  TIMES

Capitalisation, week's change

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Mid cap sector	Company	Price	Wkly Chg	% Chg	Yld	P/E	Mid cap sector	Company	Price	Wkly Chg	% Chg	Yld	P/E	Mid cap sector	Company	Price	Wkly Chg	% Chg	Yld	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES																				
6,261.00	Affordable	597.7	-1.1	-1.8	4.2	15.0	14,321.00	Agipene Mfg	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0	14,321.00	Alcan	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0
7,121.00	Alcohol Control	597.7	-1.1	-1.8	4.2	15.0	11,211.00	Alcoholics Int'l	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0	11,211.00	Alcoholics Int'l	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0
9,482.00	Burnt Sheet	527.7	-1.1	-2.1	2.7	21.7	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0
20,245.00	Beverage Mktg	527.7	-1.1	-2.1	2.7	21.7	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0
32,727.00	Beverage Mktg	527.7	-1.1	-2.1	2.7	21.7	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0
32,727.00	Beverage Mktg	527.7	-1.1	-2.1	2.7	21.7	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0
7,121.00	Holland Dist	527.7	-1.1	-2.1	2.7	21.7	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0
21,045.00	Holland Dist	527.7	-1.1	-2.1	2.7	21.7	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0
7,121.00	Holliston Dist	527.7	-1.1	-2.1	2.7	21.7	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0	18,024.00	Barus	527.7	+1.1	2.1	5.2	10.0
3,560.00	CA Breweries	1,067.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3														
BANKS																				
10,255.00	ABN AMRO	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	ABN AMRO	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	ABN AMRO	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	ABN AMRO	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	ABN AMRO	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	ABN AMRO	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
3,143.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3
10,255.00	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,077.7	Admiral & Lloyds	1,077.7	-1.0	-1.5	1.4	14.3	1,07						

There's no stopping the equity market bandwagon. Last week the US stock market posted all-time highs. Yes, I know that there was a new year and the birth of a new currency to celebrate. But this was surely exuberance beyond the call of duty. The performance of the US stock market continues to amaze—and to demand explanation.

According to one view, the explanation is simple. This is a classic inflationary boom caused by rapid growth of the money supply. The spillover from generalised inflation has been held back by the effects of the Asian crisis, the earlier strength of the dollar and the weakness of commodity prices. But just you wait. Some time soon, the wider effects will come through and inflation will take off.

On this view, far from deserving the man of the year award, the Fed Chairman, Alan Greenspan, has made an appalling mistake in cutting US interest rates. Low rates have encouraged bank borrowing and this has inflated the money supply. Flush with cash, investors

Mass delusion of US stock market



ROGER BOOTLE

have sought other assets—hence the great rush into equities. This is a repeat of the story played out in Britain in the late Eighties, only this time the asset bubble is primarily in stocks rather than residential property. Eventually, what Greenspan has caused through setting interest rates too low he will have to correct by raising them—and that will prick the stock market bubble.

But there are other ways of explaining US monetary growth. The surge of the stock market has itself encouraged borrowing. Individuals have been made to feel richer and this has prompted them to spend above their current earnings, financed by borrowing. So monetary growth and rising stock prices may go together, but it may be the strength of the stock market that lies behind the monetary growth and not the other way round.

For companies, the relationship has been symbiotic. Major support for the stock market has come from US companies buying back their own shares, financed either by increased borrowing, or by cash that might otherwise have been used to reduce borrowing. As the market has risen, this strategy has been vindicated, thereby encouraging more of the same.

Simultaneously, monetary growth has been boosted by a big structural shift. The US current account deficit with the rest of the world has continued to grow. This by itself has required increased finance, but, meanwhile, the Federal Government has moved into surplus. (So much for the idea that current account deficits and fiscal deficits are two sides of the same coin.) This internal shift is profoundly important for the growth of the US money supply because

the Government does not borrow from the banks, but the two sectors whose financial balance is deteriorating, namely persons and corporations, do.

So if monetary growth is not the fundamental explanation for the exuberance of the equity market, what is? My answer will not appeal to those who believe in the un-

failing rationality of financial markets. I think the valuation of the US equity market has about it the quality of a mass delusion, which feeds on itself, rather like a chain letter. Such phenomena are, after all, far from unknown in the world of investment. The South Sea Bubble and the Dutch Tulip Mania readily spring to mind.

At the root of the present delusion is the unpreparedness of investors to accept pedestrian returns on their portfolios after the heady rewards of the past. Cash or bonds paying only 5 per cent or so can readily be dismissed as boring.

The prevailing view is that there must be something that is going to yield 20 per cent-plus. Equities have returned that in the past, so why not stick with a winner?

The sophisticated version of this is the view derived from statistical studies that equities "always" out-

perform in the end. But if the economy is to grow by 4 per cent real in the good times and perhaps 2.5 per cent on average, while the prices that businesses can charge for their products are rising by 1 to 2 per cent, why should there be an asset class that is going to return you 20 per cent-plus?

The fact that investors have recently enjoyed spectacular returns from equities should make you more cautious, not less.

Moreover, the bull market seems to be propelled by two completely opposite sorts of stock. On the one side, there are the high-tech stocks, which power ahead even though they have next to no earnings. Amazon.com, the online book and music retailer, last week announced that revenues had quadrupled in the fourth quarter but also warned analysts not to expect a lower quarterly loss as a re-

sult. The effect? The shares immediately rose 5 per cent.

On the other side, there are the old sectors, where stocks rise on the prospects for "consolidation". Even the weaker performers zoom ahead on the view that they will be taken over. There was a time when over-capacity was sorted out at great cost to the shareholders by companies going bust. Now, the shareholders seem to enjoy a bonanza.

Worry about an upsurge of inflation in the US, if you like. Personally, I am more concerned by the idea that the US is playing out a different version of what happened in Japan. Asset values have detached themselves from the income streams that they generate. When reality dawns, the result will be a crash towards deflation. Far from rising sharply, US interest rates and bond yields would then be driven to super-low levels. We are indeed supremely fortunate that we have Alan Greenspan, and some mad monetarist, to chart a course through these treacherous waters.

Efforts to tackle bug could end in bust

BY CARL MORTISHED

FEARS are growing that efforts by large companies to protect their businesses from the millennium bug could lead to a rapid boom followed by a bust at the turn of the century.

Evidence is emerging of stockpiling in both raw materials and products as firms attempt to ringfence their operations from anticipated distribution and supply-chain failures caused by computer failures.

The possibility of computer meltdown, known as the Year 2000 (Y2K) problem, is causing

by the inability of older generation computer programmes and hardware to recognise dates in four digits. Billions of pounds are being spent to correct the problem but concern about panic buying is encouraging firms to stockpile.

Drug companies are planning sharp increases in inventory to guarantee supplies of essential drugs, while just-in-time manufacturers in areas such as food and in the car industry are seeking guarantees from suppliers.

The prospect of a sudden build-up in stocks is worrying investment analysts who believe that some companies have failed to alert investors to a potential problem.

Bill O'Neill, economist at HSBC, the investment bank, reckons that defensive behaviour in anticipation of a "millennium bomb" will give a quick boost to the economy while at the same time depressing corporate profits in 1999. He said: "It will depress profits to the extent that firms need working capital to build up inventory."

Evidence from Cap Gemini, the information technology group, suggests that firms are planning to stockpile and the trend is likely to worsen. According to its survey of 1,700 businesses in two countries, about a third overall were planning to increase inventories and as much as 38 per cent of US firms. Curtis Webster of Cap Gemini said that the survey, undertaken last year, was about intentions. He expects the number to increase. "People have less confidence in their suppliers than in their own systems and many are building boxes around their organisations." The trend is evident among drug companies, such as SmithKline Beecham, Zeneca and Novartis. Virginia Pascoe, analyst at HSBC, said that she will be adjusting her forecasts for the sector to take account of the cost of increased inventories. "They are planning to build up stocks themselves because they do not want wholesalers to increase stocks."

The drug industry is highly sensitive, particularly in the large US healthcare market, to price pressure from buyers. A build-up in stock by wholesalers could hand buyers a weapon that could boomerang back on manufacturers. Mr Webster sees a wider threat to the whole of industry if the trend picks up. "A mini-crash is a real risk."



Retailers say January sales have not compensated for weak pre-Christmas figures. Consumers appear to have money but lack confidence to spend it

Christmas sales confirm retailers' fears

BY JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE Christmas shopping season appears to have lived up to retailers' worst fears, with figures tomorrow expected to show that retail sales failed to grow in December compared with a year ago.

The British Retail Consortium is also expected to announce a drop in sales in the October to December period compared with the previous three months.

confirming that consumer spending has slowed markedly.

The BRC has not reported a zero year-on-year figure since it started compiling its Monthly Sales Monitor in January 1994, and a flat figure is likely to prompt calls from the retailers' representative for more interest rate cuts to head off an even more severe slowdown on the high street.

A gloomy set of BRC figures will dash hopes raised last week by positive trading state-

ments from Next and Clinton Cards and by a slightly less gloomy survey of distributive trades from the Confederation of British Industry.

In December 1997 a slow run-up to Christmas was compensated for by healthy January sales—a season of two halves. However, retailers are reporting that this year the sales have not been strong enough to compensate for weak pre-Christmas weeks.

Retailers said that they were baffled by the poor showing from consumers, saying that they appear to have money but not the confidence to spend it. There has been a great deal of anecdotal evidence that consumers are prepared to buy, but only at highly competitive prices.

However, TJ Hughes, a discount department store operating largely in the North West and the Midlands, yesterday reported a 44 per cent rise in total sales during the Christmas period, with like-for-like sales down about 2 per cent.

Christmas trading statements are imminent from large retailers such as Kingfisher, Boots, Great Universal Stores, Selfridges and Dixons. Retailers said that they were

(stripping out changes in retailing floor space) up 12 per cent.

John Lewis said on Friday that its sales had risen by 21 per cent in the Christmas week, but the figures were boosted by the opening of a new store in Bristol. Analysts estimated that like-for-like sales were down about 2 per cent.

Christmas trading statements are imminent from large retailers such as Kingfisher, Boots, Great Universal Stores, Selfridges and Dixons.

Taiwan deal for Alstom

BY JASON NISSE

ALSTOM, the Anglo-French engineering company, will today sign a £650 million (£450 million) contract for construction of a coal-fired power plant in Taiwan (Janet Bush writes).

The contract with Ho-Ping Power Corporation is one of the first private initiatives in independent power production in Taiwan, according to Alstom. Building work will begin this month, with commercial operation expected to begin in 2002.

Alstom will be responsible for the design, supply, construction and commissioning of the plant, including the civil engineering.

Cantor locked in dispute with BT

BY JASON NISSE

CANTOR FITZGERALD, one of the world's leading money-brokers, is in a bitter dispute with British Telecom about a worldwide trading system that Cantor says does not work.

The International Trading Platform ordered from BT's Syngenta Systems division two years ago at a cost of £2.4 million plus VAT was supposed to link Cantor's giant dealing room in the City with its headquarters in New York and its offices in Frankfurt, Milan and Luxembourg.

The system involved communications links between dealing screen along with computer hardware and software. Cantor, a specialist in money market transactions, runs trading operations 24 hours a day around the world, passing the "trading book" across time zones from the US to Europe and then to the Far East and back to the US.

The deal was seen as a coup for the Syngenta Systems operation. However, Cantor claims that problems began to emerge as the system was being installed.

FT plans edition in German

BY RAYMOND SNODDY
MEDIA EDITOR

THE Financial Times is considering the launch of a German language edition as part of its expansion plans in Europe.

Andrew Gowers, Deputy Editor of the business daily and acting Editor for more than 12 months during a period spent by the Editor, Richard Lambert, in the US, will move to Germany almost immediately to explore the feasibility of the project.

The FT is likely to announce today that Peter Martin, international editor, will become deputy editor. Pearson, the media and information group that owns the FT, announced nearly two years ago that it was to spend up to £100 million developing the paper over five years, mainly in the US. Mr Lambert went to the US to spearhead a successful effort to expand in the American market, and increased sales there helped to drive the FT's record to record peaks of more than 350,000.

It is expected that Mr Gowers, a former Reuters Zurich correspondent who is fluent in German, will perform the same role in Germany, with the title of Editorial Director. Mr Gowers said: "We don't have a venture yet but it looks promising."

Tay rebel seeks quick turnaround

BY ROBERT LEA

THE dissident Tay Homes shareholder trying to oust its chief executive has no intention of staying involved in running the northern housebuilder.

Richard Tice, joint chief executive of the privately owned Sunley Group, a 10 per cent shareholder in Tay, has forced a special meeting of Tay investors, likely to be next month, at which he is seeking the removal of the four main directors.

Mr Tice, 34, grandson of Tay's share price performance, claims to have the sup-

port of Tay's largest investor, PDM, the fund manager, which holds 17 per cent of it.

Mr Tice admitted that the management team he has assembled to displace Tay's board will be a stop-gap. "We plan to act as facilitators in the turnaround of this business," he said. "We intend to cut the cost base and cut back debt and then merge the business to create a larger entity."

Mr Tice, 34, grandson of Tay's share price performance, claims to have the sup-

Case studies aid business students

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

CAN you imagine what goes into converting a Spitfire factory into the production plant for the new Jaguar S-Type? Or how set about launching a brand new bank?

If you want an insight into these and many other challenges faced by modern businesses, then this year's *The Times 100* is here to help. This specialist guide for students of business and economics is now in its fourth edition and boasts a collection of inside stories from more than 50 leading organisations.

The case studies underline the message that business is anything but boring. Jaguar, which is part of the Ford group, explains how it developed its new S-Type and prepared Castle Bromwich, a factory built in 1938 by the Ministry of Aviation, so that

the entire car could be assembled at the single site.

Sainsbury, the supermarket group, explains how it took advantage of changes in high street banking to launch its own fully fledged bank, the first of its kind in the United Kingdom.

Golden Wonder goes into the thinking that lay behind its own launch of a low-fat crisp. The idea came from observing the rise of the lunch-box culture, with so many people being too busy to have a proper midday meal, and the consumer's desire for healthier foods.

The idea behind *The Times 100* is to give students up-to-date information that can be used alongside their textbooks so that they can understand an ever-changing business world.

Something of Interest from Charles Schwab

All cash balances on Charles Schwab share trading accounts can earn you interest. With effect from Monday 11th of January 1999, the following new interest rates will be applied to cash balances held on Share Trading accounts.

Gross Interest p.a. based on cash balances	PEP Accounts	MarketMaster	Frequent Traders Club	Traded Options
£20,000+	3.75%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
£5,000-£19,999	3.25%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%
£500-£4,999	1.75%	1.75%	1.75%	1.75%
£50-£499	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%

All interest rates are correct at the time of going to press and replace all previously quoted rates.

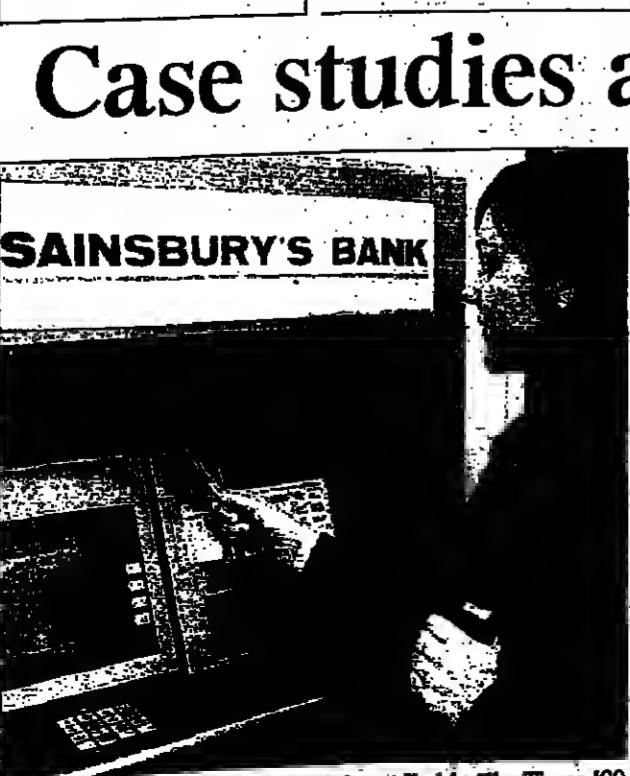
For more information on Charles Schwab Dealing Accounts please call our literature request line on 0870 601 8888 - ref: TT494

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The launch of Sainsbury's Bank is studied in *The Times 100*



Keizo Obuchi, left, last week issued a joint statement with President Chirac seeking to establish "a framework for mutual co-operation given the launch of the euro"

Dark side of the moon shadows dawn of euro

In its infancy, the new currency could find itself appreciating and creating demand problems for European exporters, writes Janet Bush

For all the birthday champagne and portentous rhetoric, the euro's first week was completely upstaged by dramatic movements in the dollar and the yen, its quarrelsome older siblings.

The US currency hit a 27-month low against the Japanese currency on Thursday, a slump of 35 per cent in the past five months, and there is every reason to expect more foreign exchange fires in the months to come. As these two mighty tectonic plates threaten to grind against each other, it is no wonder that France used the euro's launch to relaunch its own version of currency target zones.

Keizo Obuchi, Japan's Prime Minister, who was last week on a tour of Europe, and Jacques Chirac, the French President, issued a joint statement on Thursday in which they agreed to seek to establish "a renewed framework for mutual co-operation on exchange markets, including strengthened mutual dialogue on macroeconomic policies, given the launch of the euro". In Tokyo, Toyoo Gyohten, a special advisor to the Japanese Prime Minister, said that setting a broad target zone would be a good start. Target zones are likely to figure again at Friday's meeting of ASEM, the Asia-Europe forum, in Frankfurt with Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's Finance Minister and a keen proponent of the idea.

Target zones are vehemently opposed by central bankers, including the European Central Bank and are not a realistic prospect in anything but the long term. The fact that they are being discussed is, however, highly suggestive both of a common European and Japanese desire to break US hegemony over world economic management and of real fear within euroland of damaging volatility among the big three currencies.

On the latter, euroland has genuine reason to be worried. Economic problems in both America and Japan are mounting and, if international investors lose faith in two out of the big three currencies, there is a real threat of massive inflows into the euro with all that this implies for

growth and the battle to bring down mass unemployment on the Continent.

It would be a grave mistake to view the yen's appreciation, particularly its rapid rise last week, as a signal of imminent recovery in the Japanese economy. Yen were in demand mostly because banks and hedge funds were unwinding huge loss-making investment plays in which they had borrowed cheap yen to invest in higher-yielding dollar assets. Now they are buying back yen and selling dollars.

In fact, the rising yen has all the potential for making Japan's already parlous economic situation worse. The currency's strength has already damaged Japan's trade performance. Ministry of Finance figures show that in November, Japan's trade surplus had fallen by 15 per cent from a year earlier, with exports being ominously outstripped by imports. (Unfortunately for Japan's invariably strained relations with America on trade, its surplus with the US continued to widen). Toyota calculates that a rise of Y1 against the dollar on average cuts its annual revenue by Y10 billion, or \$9 million.

At the same time, long-term interest rates have been rising

because Japanese institutions simply cannot afford (or have no appetite for) a gargantuan programme of Japanese government bonds which need to be issued to finance Japan's expansionary fiscal policies. The yield on the benchmark 10-year JGB has risen to above 2 per cent for the first time since September, 1997.

Far from growth returning to Japan this year, authoritative economists are talking about a further contraction in Japanese activity of something between 3 and 5 per cent. It is inconceivable that the yen can go on appreciating in these circumstances – unless the American economy finally cracks.

Leading Japanese officials preferred last week to focus on America's problems. Having been lectured for years by the US Treasury and its acolytes in the International Monetary Fund about Japan's excesses in the 1980s, the glee with which Eisuke Sakakibara, Vice-Finance Minister, expressed concerns about America's "bubble-like economy" was entirely understandable.

It also echoes a growing consensus that America's position as the world's spender of last resort, invaluable as demand collapsed in Asia last year, is no longer sustainable.

Nobody knows when the crack will come – even now the American public is blithely continuing to spend far more than it earns on the assumption that Wall Street will go on rising for ever – but most believe that, when the party is over, the hangover is going to be punishing. America's current account deficit is heading towards a record \$300 billion this year. As a proportion of GDP, this would be about 3.5 per cent, as high as it was in 1987 when the dollar went into free fall.

It is therefore easy to make a case for both the yen and the dollar falling on economic grounds. The most obvious destination for this money is the euro, which is already likely to be under upward pressure as portfolios are adjusted to the new super-currency. For those European politicians who triumphantly proclaimed their belief that the euro would threaten the dollar's dominance as the world's reserve currency last week – even before the first euro trade was settled – this may seem to be astonishingly good news.

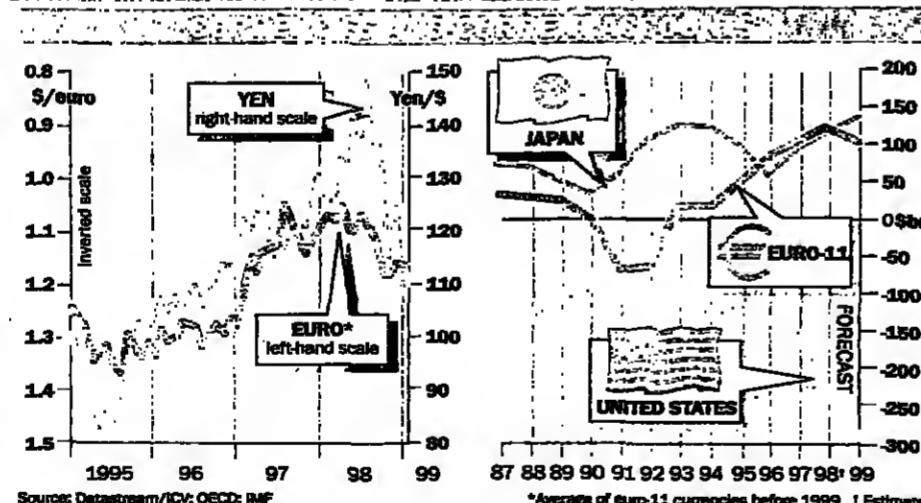
By virtue of chronic economic problems in the lands of the dollar and the yen, the euro could, even in its infancy, be a powerful magnet to interna-

tional investment funds. It would, however, be a huge mistake to allow longer-term ambitions for the euro and for Europe's influence in the world monetary system to obscure the brutally uncomfortable position that euroland may soon find itself in. It could find, in its infancy, that both Japan (and Asia) and America (and Latin America) are in recession, or near to it. There will, therefore, be a demand problem for Europe's exporters. That problem could be exacerbated by a really strong and appreciating currency.

Tensions, already evident between euroland's centre-left governments and the European Central Bank, could quickly deteriorate further as growth stalls and unemployment rises. Relations between member states may become heated far sooner than they would have done with a relatively benign world backdrop. There will be no safety valve in a depreciating currency or in a substantial fiscal stimulus because the Growth and Stability Pact forbids it. Popular political acceptance of the euro, already no more than lukewarm, could quickly chill.

None of this is to say that the euro is already a failure. It is, however, to introduce a dose of realism into last week's exuberant globo-top table. Japan's leaders have spent their visit to Europe trying to preserve the yen's status as one of the big three rather than trying to talk the currency down and so protect its exporters. America has, since the euro was born, been busy with the shenanigans taking shape in the Senate and has contributed little.

Against this background, Britain's best strategy would be to avoid the euro at all costs and to allow sterling to float freely in a man's land between the big three. Currency obscurity – not greatness – may be the best recipe for stability.

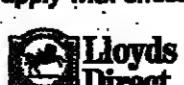


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Savings	Previous AER/gross rate %	New AER/gross rate %	New net rate %
£50,000+	6.25	6.00	4.80
£25,000+	6.10	5.85	4.68
£10,000+	6.00	5.75	4.60
£5,000+	5.75	5.50	4.40
£2,500+	5.25	5.00	4.00

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These rates of interest apply with effect from 11 January 1999



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Answers from page 40

HUTUNG

(c) In northern Chinese cities: a narrow side-street, an alley. "In places the hutungs are only just wide enough for a man to pass."

MAESTRIA

(b) Skill, mastery. The Italian word. While admiring the maestria of this piece of writing by Mr Shaw I find in it several inaccuracies."

MORAN

(a) The warrior group of the Masai tribe which comprises the younger unmarried males. Also a member of this group. The Masai word.

"The Moran are the warrior age-grade. In the past the Moran constituted a free military organisation within the tribe."

NUNC STANS

(a) The eternal times now presumed, as an attribute of God, to co-exist with Time. From the Latin nunc now + stans present participle of stare to stand.

"In willing the world is at once an eternal process and an eternal stationary thing - a nunc stans - at the same time."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. Nf3 wins, eg. 1...gxf3; 2.Qh4 and mate follows.

TELEVISION CHOICE

A moving family comedy

Dad
BBC1, 8.30pm

Andrew Marshall's sitcom about fathers and sons is back for a second series and should continue to find an appreciative audience among those who like their comedy benign rather than abrasive. If Dad lacks the surreal touches that enliven Marshall's *24-7*, Children's portrayal of family relationships is no less accurate. Tonight's episode is built around a familiar proposition, that moving house is a trauma only a notch short of bereavement. But, thanks to Marshall's script and assured playing, it says the course. The prospect of the move has put Kevin McNally's chronically stressed Alan even more on edge than usual and the joke is that while trying to help, his wife, son and, most of all, his father only make matters worse. George Cole's Brian is a delightful study in timing and understatement.

Mayday: Lost at Sea
Channel 4, 9.00pm

The second in this series about accidents at sea focuses on the sinking of the ferry boat Estonia on a rough night in the Baltic in 1994. The death toll of 850 made it Europe's worst passenger ship disaster, but still nobody knows for certain what caused it. The film reconstructs the episode with the help of survivors, notably Paul Barney, an English landscape gardener, who, after the ship went down, spent the night adrift on a lifeboat with 13 other passengers. By dawn only six were alive. The official inquiry blamed a design fault in the bow door. It suggested that the locks and hinges were not sufficient to stop heavy waves tearing it off, allowing water to surge into the car deck and turn the boat over. A team of German experts re-enacted this, claiming that the ship was so poorly maintained that it was not fit to sail.

The League of Gentlemen
BBC2, 9.30pm

After the gentle comedy of *Dad*, here is something completely different. Among the milder of several jokes is a hearse where the flowers on the coffin spell BASTARD. Among the regular characters are a transsexual taxi driver and a vet who puts the wrong animal to sleep. There are gags about



Mark Gatiss and Reece Shearsmith star in *The League of Gentlemen* (BBC2, 9.30pm)

sexology, gynaecology and private parts. The writer-performers are four young men who met at Leeds University and won the Perrier Award at Edinburgh in 1997. Three of the team play all the characters, of which there are more than 60 in the series, both male and female. This latest venture is a sort of gruesome soap opera, set in a dead-end northern town and delivered as a series of sketches. Some will find it hilarious, others will be disgusted. It is difficult to see any reaction in between.

Trial by Jury
BBC2, 11.15pm

Here is another of those fictional court cases given verisimilitude by using a real judge and barristers and having the verdict delivered by a jury from the ordinary public. Admittedly the accused and the witnesses are played by actors but not, on the whole, so that you would notice. Screened over three consecutive nights, the trial is of Mark Fay, charged with murdering his wife. The prosecution paints the background of a disintegrating marriage and alleges that Fay carried out the murder to head off a costly divorce settlement. Fay says his wife was killed by a prowler who had broken into the house and knocked him unconscious. Armchair jurors fascinated by conflicting evidence, or those who find in courtroom one of the most satisfying forms of drama, should be equally gripped. Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

Stephen Lawrence: The Truth
Radio 5 Live, 8.00pm

The second part of the title may be optimistic given the elusive nature of the truth in the shameful case of the murder of Stephen Lawrence, but this two-hour reconstruction of the inquiry, based on transcripts (the official report has yet to be published), provides a valuable service, albeit one which should not have been necessary, because an inquiry of this importance should have been covered by radio and television in the first place. But in Britain, disclosure remains an ambition rather than a reality. The reconstruction, presented by Trevor Phillips, graphically recalls the appalling errors of commission and omission, made by the police. The programme consists of 25-minute segments, mixing reconstruction and analysis. Peter Barnard

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast 8.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Kevin Greening 1.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Chris Evans 8.00 World News 8.05 Westway Access 9.20 The Vintage Chart Show 9.30 Sports Round-Up 10.00 Newsdesk 10.30 Britain Today 10.45 The Farming World 11.00 Newsdesk 11.20 Pick of the World 12.00pm News 12.05 Outlook 12.45 Sports Round-Up 1.00 Newsweek 2.00 World News 2.05 Health Matters 2.30 Vehicles 3.00 World News 3.30 Sports Round-Up 3.45 Insight 4.00 Eurosport Today 4.30 World News 4.15 Insight 4.30 Multi-track 4.45 Eurosport Today 5.00 Eurosport 5.15 World News 5.15 Britain Today 5.30 The Next Big Thing 7.00 World News 7.15 Health Matters 7.30 Sports World 7.45 Off the Shelf 8.00 Saturday Super Sunday 8.00 World News 8.05 Westway Access 9.20 The Vintage Chart Show 9.30 Sports Round-Up 10.00 Newsdesk 10.30 Britain Today 10.45 The Farming World 11.00 Newsdesk 11.20 Pick of the World 12.00pm News 12.05 Outlook 12.45 Insight 12.50pm The World Today 12.55 Health Matters 12.55 My Century 1.00 The World Today 1.30 Westway 1.45 Record News 2.00 The World Today 2.30 The Next Big Thing 3.00 The World Today 3.20 Sports Round-Up 3.30 World Business Report 3.45 Insight 4.00 The World Today

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.00 Wicks Up to Wicks 8.00 Kon Bruce 12.00 Jimmy Young 1.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 Johnnie Walker 7.00 Humphrey Lyttelton 8.00 Big Band Legend Live, Michael Parkinson presents a new series featuring big band leaders in concert (1/6 8.30 George Formby (2/4 9.30 in Days Before Rock 'n' Roll); (3/4 10.30 Richard Allister 12.00pm Ketene Laskin 3.00 Alex Lester)

7.00am Morning Report 8.00 Breakfast with Nick Robinson and Victoria Derbyshire 8.00 Nick Campbell 12.00pm The Midday Sound 9.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 10.00 The Big Band Concert 11.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 12.00pm The Big Band Concert 1.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 2.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 3.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 4.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 5.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 6.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 7.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 8.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 9.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 10.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 11.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 12.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 1.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 2.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 3.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 4.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 5.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 6.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 7.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 8.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 9.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 10.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 11.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 12.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 1.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 2.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 3.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 4.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 5.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 6.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 7.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 8.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 9.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 10.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 11.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 12.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 1.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 2.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 3.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 4.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 5.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 6.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 7.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 8.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 9.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 10.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 11.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 12.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 1.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 2.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 3.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 4.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 5.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 6.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 7.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 8.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 9.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 10.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 11.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 12.00 Radio 2's 10th Anniversary 1.0

Nice photography, shame about the plot

Watching a Stephen Poliakoff drama is getting like listening to an intelligent drunk at a party. He has some fascinating ideas. He constantly confronts you and pulls you up short. He has urgent propositions about "things that really matter". And he blithely mimes brilliant insights with clichés so crass you want to pour the contents of the ice bucket over his head.

Poliakoff is an undead survivor of a radical past, still determined to see the world through committed, irony-free, pre-Postmodernist eyes. This ought to be refreshing, but the results can be dire, as in the preposterous *The Tribe: Shooting the Past* (Sunday, BBC2) is a rather more complex curate's egg.

The central theme — the rich cultural meaning of a photographic archive — the heart-stopping power of still images, each one an amulet into a lost world of human experience — is wonderful. At the heart

of the first episode, head librarian Marilyn Truman (Lindsay Duncan) uses pictures collated from different sections of a threatened collection to trace the story of a Jewish girl in Nazi Berlin.

The idea that Truman's deputy, Oswald (Timothy Spall), would spend hours sifting through thousands of images in case this Holocaust survivor happened to have been snappet at the Elephant and Castle decades later is fairly ludicrous. That he should recognise her as a dishevelled old woman when the last known image showed her as a young girl is even more so. But that seemed tolerable. The example was symbolic of the priceless realities latent in such archives. It was very moving, if only explained yet, all of this is to happen at a few days' notice. The central thrust of a valid argument was constantly undermined by this childishly implausible plot.

Much has been made in the press of the irony that the BBC had to hire back pictures for the production from a priceless archive that

the Corporation itself off-loaded at a knockdown price. This might seem to prove Poliakoff's vision of a philistine, accountancy-driven corporate culture discarding our inheritance. The real irony is that it doesn't.

Poliakoff's American executives are cardboard ruthless capitalists who live by ruthless schedules, shooting ruthless things into their ruthless mobiles. They propose to sell off a few valuable pictures and discard the bulk of the collection. The gorgeous interior of the library building, which Poliakoff chose to film at Ham House, is to be ripped out for conversion into a 21st-century business school. Through an unlikely contrivance, which hasn't been fully explained yet, all of this is to happen at a few days' notice. The central thrust of a valid argument was constantly undermined by this childishly implausible plot.

It was very moving, if only



Paul Hoggart

Of course, the BBC's archive was not lost. It was sold on more than once at vastly mounting profits, precisely because grasping American businessmen knew it had huge commercial, as well as historical, value. There were terrific performances from Lindsay Duncan and Timothy Spall as her scruffy, Bolshevik, manipulative deputy, but these issues are not straightforward, and Poliakoff

does us no favours by converting them into crudely stereotyped oppositions.

Bill Bryson doesn't hold with us Brits undervaluing our cultural heritage. For an American to prefer, in some respects at least, the drizzly British lifestyle to his native variety is an oddity that puts him in a very privileged position with British readers.

He can be as rude as he likes, once he has comforted us with the assurance that basically he thinks we're just great. He did right at the beginning of *Notes From A Small Island* (TV, Sunday), a series recreating the wanderings of his boyhood. Unfortunately he hasn't yet got round to being rude.

I have always greatly enjoyed Bryson's books on language, but his travel writing has never equalled the wonderful *The Lost Continent*, in which he retraced his childhood journeys through America's obscure backwaters. He

is a mild, gentle soul, quizzical and soft-spoken, which is great as long as he is noticing the oddities of things. When his observations are merely commonplace, however, it all seems horribly bland.

Last night we took us to London, still "the greatest city in the world" apparently. The black cab are "without question the finest in the world", he told us reassuringly. We went for a ride with Stephen Fry, who owns a black cab, and went for tea with some salt-of-the-earth cabbies.

Fry drives a cab for anonymity" and because "it's a lot quicker". The explanation of this second point became curiously vague and waffly, presumably to avoid any suggestion that Fry makes imprudent use of the bus lanes.

Then Bryson whipped us off to Liverpool, "once an industrial powerhouse", no less, though now sadly depopulated as all those salt-of-

the-earth comedians inflict themselves on everyone else. Still, it has kept its "bulldog spirit". Here we met Alexei Sayle, who also managed to avoid saying anything interesting about the city, except that the accent stopped abruptly at the city boundary. By the end I was yearning for a hearty slug of acid. Bryson is much funnier when he's being rude.

Sayle popped up again in *A History of Alternative Comedy* (BBC2, Sunday), hosted by Angus Deayton. We were treated to amusings "before they were famous" bits of all the big names, including Sayle himself with improbably long hair. Nobody seemed able to agree what "alternative comedy" is (or was), except that it wasn't racist or sexist like the traditional stuff and Jo Brand said people who didn't like it were "unintelligent" and "mediocre". Thus does an anti-institutional trend become an institution.

SUNDAY	
6.00am Business Breakfast (34955)	
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (9343)	
5.00 Kirby (T) (6736121)	
5.45 The Yankee Show (T) (5101031)	
10.05 News; Weather (T) (707785)	
11.00 Rest Rooms (T) (087362)	
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (7057121)	
11.55 News; Weather (T) (1208017)	
12.00pm Call My Bluff (74926)	
12.30 Battersea Dogs' Home (40166)	
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (24240)	
1.30 Regional News; Weather (0678121)	
1.40 Neighbours The land war effects Lou's health (T) (0545227)	
2.05 Inside A 10-year-old girl is the Chief's best hope of saving the family home, when a rich socialist loses her jewels in a bag snatch incident (T) (77341)	
2.55 Going for a Song (6536986)	
3.20 The Weather Show (T) (2057817)	
3.25 Children's BBC Playdays (373986)	
3.45 The Littlest Pet Shop (914319)	
3.55 Badger and Badger (5560850) 4.10 Pocket Dragon Adventures (5559430)	
4.20 Rugrats (601633) 4.35 Misery Guts (1793053) 5.00 Neverland (5530782)	
5.10 Blue Peter (6670237)	
5.35 Neighbours (T) (592165)	
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (121)	
6.30 Regional News Magazine (701)	
7.00 This is Your Life Michael Aspel surprises another unsuspecting guest with the big red book (T) (9898)	
7.30 Watching Heavenskies includes a look at why Scandinavians live longer than other Europeans (T) (985)	
8.00 EastEnders Ruth makes a shocking discovery (T) (8546)	



George Cole stars as the sometimes awkward grandfather, Brian (8.30pm)

8.30 Cold Feet Dad: New series of the domestic sitcom. With George Cole, Kevin McNally and Toby Ross-Bryant (T) (7053)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News: Regional News; Weather (T) (9879)
9.30 Paddington Green Jackie considers expensive plastic surgery to complete her sex-change (T) (8972)
10.00 Panorama Neville Lawrence, father of murder victim Stephen, questions the Metropolitan Police Force's commitment to tackling racism crime (T) (340153)
10.45 Breach of Conduct (1994) Premiere. A woman has an affair with her military husband's boss, who later kidnaps her. Thriller, starring Peter Coyote and Courtney Thorne-Smith. Directed by Tim Matheson (T) (762516)
12.15 Billy Two Hats (1973) Bizarre western, focusing on the friendship between an elderly Scottish outlaw and a young, half-breed Indian. Gregory Peck and Desi Arnaz Jr star. Directed by Ted Kotcheff (277928)
1.45 Weather (2235164)
1.50 BBC News 24 (75129216)

1.50 BBC News 24 (75129216)

BBC2	
7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Wiggle Park (164309) 7.05 Teletubbies (229634) 7.10 The Zoo (230512)	
8.15 Tez-Maze (7057071) 8.45 Police Dot Shorts (2208931) 8.50 Ronald the Reindeer (8204275) 9.00 Space Ark (7131546) 9.10 Short Circuit (6540411)	
9.30 Whiting and Pictures (831324) 9.45 Storyline (311888) 10.00 Teletubbies (40305) 10.30 Words and Pictures (5077782) 10.45 Cats Eyes (5072237)	
11.00 Look and Read (1539546) 11.20 Zig Zag (6558527) 11.40 Landmarks (5761324) 12.05m History File (4580324) 12.30 Working Lunch (40148)	
1.00 Romulus the Reindeer (7374968) 1.10 The Arts and Crafts Hour (2564508)	
2.00 Sporting Greats New series. Eamonn Holmes talks to British sporting heroes, beginning with Stirling Moss (2285904)	
2.40 News; Weather (T) (2828169)	
2.45 Match of Their Day New series. Garth Crooks talks to former England manager Bobby Robson (T) (1120559)	
3.25 ITV: Mopane's Shop (2042508) 3.35 Today TV (8594430) 3.45 The Adventures of Captain Pugwash (1657192)	
4.00 Oggy and the Cockroaches (6537643) 4.20 It's a Mystery (4874745) 4.45 Sabrina the Teenage Witch (1717633)	
5.10 WEST: Painting Wild Wales Sketches and water-colours of rural beauty, beginning in Shropshire (T) (200594)	
5.10 WALES: Monymusk Antiques and collectables (16) (T) (220594)	
5.40 ITN Early Evening News (T) (190850)	
6.00 Home and Away (T) (456817)	
6.25 WALES: Wales Tonight (T) (867492)	
6.25 WEST: ITV Weather (T) (704343)	
6.30 The West Tonight (T) (169)	
7.00 Who Were You? Includes visits to Aspen, Colorado, and the new Turkish resort of Belek (T) (996)	
7.30 Coronation Street The hospital inquiry has an unexpected outcome (T) (463)	
8.00 Who Wants To Be a Millionaire? Big-prize game show (T) (3614)	



Carol Vorderman presents more design makeovers (8.30pm)

9.30 Carol Vorderman's Better Homes The design teams visit Thorpe-Bainbridge near Doncaster, where they work their makeover magic on a derelict barn and an ordinary modern garden (T) (2124)
9.00 The Vice Hitchcock's brutal treatment of Nikki brings dire repercussions. With Ken Stott (2/6) (T) (24248)
10.00 News at Ten; Weather (T) (77455)
10.30 HTV News and Weather (T) (517188)
10.40 Nash Bridges A computer hacker is blackmailed into helping crooks commit an audacious robbery (T) (30263)
11.40 Billy Bategate (1991) A teenager escapes the poverty of Depression-era New York by hooking up with a notorious gangster. Starring Dustin Hoffman, Nicole Kidman and Bruce Willis. Directed by Robert Benton (T) (14224)
1.35 Football Extra (3361034)
2.35 World Football (6) (6608366)
3.05 House of Dracula (1945) A scientist encounters the Wolf Man and Frankenstein's monster. Starring John Carradine and Lon Chaney Jr. Directed by Eric C Kenton (5645763)
4.15 Soundies (6050247)
4.25 ITV Nightflight (3937183)
5.00 Coronation Street (T) (T) (11744)

Starts 5.55am Sesame Street (T) (45098492)

7.00 The Big Breakfast (7068545) 9.00 Yggdrasil: The English Programme (86384343)

9.25 Schools at Work (72503169) 9.30 Geography Junction (86965646) 9.45 BookBox (86864701) 10.00 Stage Two Science (35274714) 10.15 Victorian Scots (35340362) 10.30 Place and People (17322895) 10.50 Stop, Desperately Listen (9305169)

11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier (T) (24248)

12.00pm Right, Right, Right (T) (24248)

1.00 Meridian News; Weather (T) (61943)

1.30 Coronation Street (T) (120263)

1.45 Collectors' Lot (79133121)

1.50 You're in the Army Now (1961)

1.55 Wartime comedy following the antics of a hapless crew on board a steam-powered ship. Gary Cooper and Jane Greer star. Henry Hathaway directs (T) (6192053)

2.30 Hampton Court Palace (T) (275)

4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (722)

4.30 Countdown (T) (1787492)

6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (30843)

8.00-9.00 Meridian News; Weather (T) (517188)

9.00-10.00 Here's One I Made Earlier (T) (24248)

10.00 Sesame Street (T) (5072)

12.30pm Switched (T) (92256)

1.00 Pet Rescue (T) (79140)

1.30 Roots to Success (867841)

1.45 Family Affairs Jamie looks after his mother for the divorce (T) (9601324)

1.50 The Bold and the Beautiful Bridget jeans Eric is her father (T) (906275)

1.50 The Roseanne Show (9900655)

2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (6321695)

2.30 Good Afternoon (4520459)

3.30 Bachelor Knight (1947) A teenager sets his sights on an attractive older man — but he is more interested in her sister. Romantic comedy, starring Cary Grant and Myrna Loy. Directed by Irving Reit (T) (96



COMPANIES 43
Dixons clues
on consumer
spending

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

MONDAY JANUARY 11 1999

BUSINESS

US CLIMB 45

Roger Bootle
on market
mass delusion



Mirror Group and Trinity at odds after talks fail

BY RAYMOND SNOODY
MEDIA EDITOR

TRINITY, the UK's largest regional newspaper group, yesterday pulled out of merger talks with Mirror Group for a second time, amid rumours of disputes in the Mirror camp.

Trinity issued a curt statement saying that it was "withdrawing

from merger talks with the Mirror Group with immediate effect". However, the move was last night being interpreted as a tactical withdrawal after the reopening of talks in November and negotiations that were in progress as recently as last week.

David Montgomery, the Mirror Group chief executive, yesterday said: "We are still interested in

doing a deal, but only one that enhances shareholder value."

Trinity, whose papers include the *Belfast Telegraph*, the *Liverpool Post* and the *Western Mail*, is believed to have proposed an all-share deal that would have given Trinity shareholders 45 per cent of the enlarged group, to the Mirror's 55 per cent. However, Mirror directors are

holding out for a 60-40 split in Mirror's favour. Ever since the start, early last year, of preliminary talks between the two companies, which were broken off at Easter, Trinity has insisted that its chief executive, Philip Graf, and not Mr Montgomery, should run the enlarged group.

The two sides last night put forward irreconcilable accounts of the

breakdown of talks. Trinity's decision to pull out was being attributed to a split between Mirror executive directors led by Mr Montgomery and non-executive directors led by Sir Victor Blank, the Mirror chairman. Mr Montgomery was being accused in print of having held talks with Morgan Stanley on a possible management buyout, something

that was being vigorously denied last night.

The Mirror camp insists that its board is united on the principle of a merger with Trinity if the right terms can be obtained. The main issues in talks between the two last week are believed to have been price and the likely synergies between Trinity and Mirror Group.

Savills set to face takeover bid from investor

BY MARTIN WALLER

SAVILLS, the quoted property consultant, is being lined up for a takeover bid from First Pacific Davies, its 20 per cent shareholder, if the company's share price fails to improve by the spring.

FPD paid 160p a share for the stake in late 1997, since when a series of British property companies, including Jones Lang Wootton, Healey & Baker and Richard Ellis, have been bought outright by big American concerns.

The purchase included a standstill agreement precluding FPD, based in Hong Kong, from buying more shares in the company until April. But Savills shares have plunged since then to below £1, although they rose 18p to 115p last week as the market scented a possible deal.

Savills will announce interim profits on Tuesday and the market is looking for a £1 million increase at the pre-tax level to about £5 million, a precursor to full-year profits the market expects to come in at about £12 million. But this puts the shares on a forward price-earnings multiple of little more than seven, in a property sector that contains only Savills and one other significant independent, DTZ Debenham Thorpe.

Aubrey Adams, managing director of Savills, said no approaches had been made for the company. "Even if there had been, we couldn't possibly comment on it."

But it is known that FPD, which has two directors on the Savills board, is seriously considering a full bid. One observer commented: "If the share price really does stay at rock-bottom levels, FPD would see the chance of buying at rather less than the 160p it initially paid."

The two companies use the FPD Savills brand on a range of ventures around the world, but there is a gap in their coverage in the US. With Savills shares at their current low levels there is no chance of growing by acquisition thereby issuing fresh equity.

Richard Ellis, part of the US-based Insignia Group, yesterday confirmed that it is in talks with St Quinian to create a group with a combined turnover of £60 million.

Lasmo and Enterprise in merger talks

BY CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

THE catastrophic fall in the price of crude oil has forced two former enemies, Enterprise Oil and Lasmo, into discussions which could lead to a £2.3 billion merger.

Lasmo, which fought off Enterprise in a bitterly contested bid battle in 1994, confirmed it was in talks with the former aggressor but this time with a view to a friendly merger.

A spokesman for Lasmo yesterday said that the talks were about "a merger of equals" and were just one of a series of initiatives aimed at improving Lasmo's competitive position, "one of which is an evaluation of a possible merger with Enterprise". He emphasised that no agreement had been reached.

News of the talks is likely to put both companies into play. BG, the gas pipeline and exploration company, is known to harbour ambitions to increase its exploration activity.

Sources close to the compa-

nies say a meeting took place before Christmas between Sir Graham Hearne, the chairman of Enterprise, and Rudolph Agnew, his opposite number at Lasmo. The meeting was followed by talks between their advisers, including Morgan Stanley and Rothschild, for Enterprise and Schroders acting for Lasmo.

However, the thorny question of who runs the combined group is far from settled. Tensions between the two were already in evidence, with neither side prepared to admit that it had initiated talks.

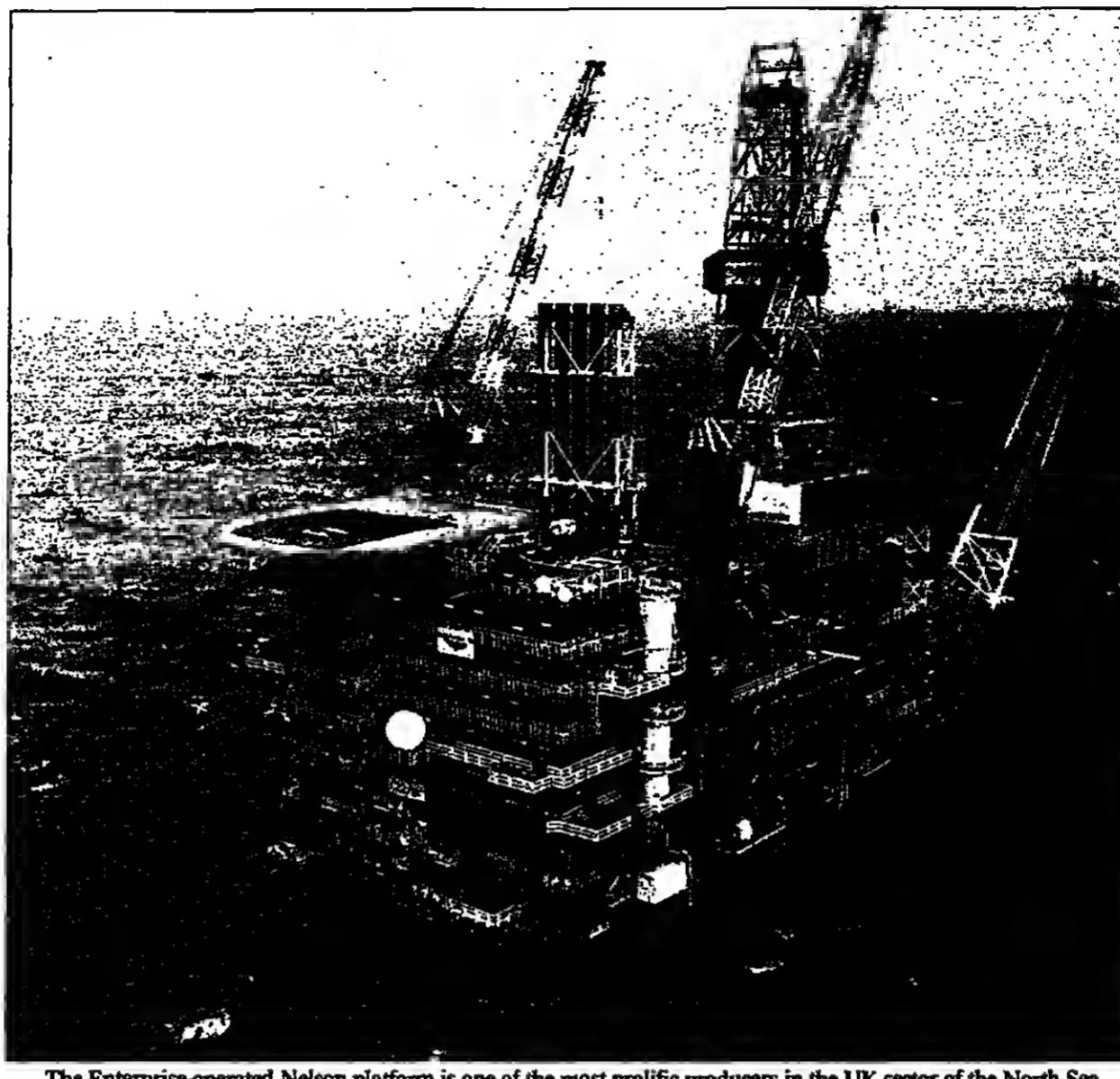
The initiative is likely to have come from Enterprise Oil, where it is believed Sir Graham has never given up on his ambition to merge the two companies after the bungled takeover bid. Shareholders demanded that he take a back seat and relinquish the

chief executive's role, which was given to Pierre Juengels.

Mr Juengels is unlikely to survive a merger, having failed to achieve much success in exploration. Moreover, he has implicitly criticised Lasmo's strategy by pouring scorn on E&P prospects in areas of political risk. Lasmo's chief executive, Joe Darby, is expected to insist on the chief executive's job.

Key to the success of the talks will be agreement on cost-cutting. Lasmo has cut 200 jobs at head office and Enterprise is under pressure to quit its expensive Trafalgar Square offices. Both have been ejected from the FTSE 100 as their share price crumbled because of the low oil price.

Lasmo, valued at £900 million on Friday, is worth half its value at the time of the Enterprise bid. The latter's shares have suffered a similar fall.



The Enterprise-operated Nelson platform is one of the most prolific producers in the UK sector of the North Sea

SB to barter for Cuba meningitis vaccine

BY PAUL DURMAN
AND PETER HARRISON

SMITH-KLINE BEECHAM is resorting to barter to secure rights to a promising meningitis vaccine developed in Cuba. Negotiations with Cuba's Finlay Institute have been complicated by American legisla-

tion that prohibits trade with Cuba. SB's Belgian-based vaccines business is a subsidiary of the pharmaceutical group's American arm, which has raised the possibility that the vaccine might fall foul of the Helms-Burton Act.

Recent industry rumours suggested that SB was plan-

ning to take legal action against the US Government on the grounds that its operation of the Cuban embargo was denying an important medicine to patients.

However, Rick Koenig, an SB spokesman, said the company is making progress in its discussions with the US. He

said SB is "not even close" to embarking on legal action.

SB struck an agreement in principle with the Finlay Institute late last year. To address US concerns about hard currency trade with Cuba, SB provisionally agreed that payments to Finlay while the vaccine moves through development

will be in the form of goods such as food and medicine.

Any royalty payments on the vaccine, which could take another four or five years to bring to market, will be paid half in cash and half in goods. The vaccine is already available in Cuba and some other South American countries.

BAA debates floating its property arm

BY CARL MORTISHED

BAA, the airport group, is considering floating Lynton, its property development arm, as part of a strategic review of its core businesses.

A BAA spokesman confirmed that a demerger of Lynton was under consideration for financial reasons. He said: "There is a real debate on this. There is a lot of value locked up in Lynton and the question is: Can we finance the development of the property business within the group?"

Speculation that BAA, headed by Sir John Egan, would hive off its property assets has grown since the group expanded its off-airport activities into factory outlets through a venture with McArthur Glen. Lynton has assets exceeding £500 million and last year made operating profits of £31 million, a relatively small contribution to BAA's £480 million profit, despite its big asset base.

BAA took over Lynton for £22 million in 1988 near the

City fears job losses over euro opt-out

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE City is fearful that the arrival of the single currency will result in sweeping job losses in the Square Mile, a survey published today shows.

The KPMG euro survey, taken just ahead of last week's euro launch, also confirms that City businesses are overwhelmingly in favour of British entry into the single currency.

The survey finds that 40 per cent of City companies expect job losses because of Britain's euro opt-out, while nearly 50 per cent believe London will be less attractive to overseas investors as a result. This contrasts with just 8 per cent of companies that believe the City's non-euro status will result in increased jobs and about a fifth of businesses that anticipate the City will still be able to attract extra business.

City firms are also increasingly warning to UK membership of the single currency, with 51 per cent more in favour of joining than six months ago.



Egan: strategic review

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